

DĀR AS-SUNNAH CLASSIC COLLECTION

# THE INNER SECRETS OF WORSHIP

by Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqḍīsī (d. 689H)

دار السنة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ





Imām Aḥmad Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī [d. 689H]

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# The INNER SECRETS of WORSHIP

A textbook on the Ethics of Worship

A TRANSLATION OF

*‘Mukhtaṣar Minhāj al-Qāṣidīn’*

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“Verily in the remembrance of Allāh do  
hearts find rest.”

[QUR’ĀN (13): 28]

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A textbook on the Ethics of Worship

by  
Imām Aḥmad Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Muḥammad Ibn  
Aḥmad Ibn Qudāmah [d. 689H]



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## AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

### In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

Shaykh *al-Imām, al-Zāhid, al-'Ābid, al-Awhad al-'Allāmah* Najmuddīn Abū'l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Shaykh *al-Imām al-'Ālim al-'Āmil al-Zāhid al-'Ābid al-'Allāmah* 'Izzuddīn Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad Ibn Shaykh *al-Imām al-'Ālim al-'Āmil al-Zāhid al-'Ābid al-'Allāmah* Shaykh *ul-Islām Mufti ul-Anām, Sayyid ul-'Ulama wa'l-Hukkām*, Shamsuddīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān ibn *Shaykh al-Imām al-'Ālim al-'Āmil al-'Ārif al-Zāhid al-Warī'* Shaykh *ul-Islām* Abū 'Umar Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī al-Ḥanbalī said:

All praise is due to Allāh Whose Mercy covers all of his servants and has specified those who have obedience with guidance to the path of guidance and has granted them, by His *Lutf* (Subtlety and Gentleness), to righteous actions and they have gained success by reaching the intent.

I praise Him, affirming the abundant aid which He imparts, and I seek refuge in Him from expulsion and distance [from Him]. I testify

that there is no god worthy of worship except Allāh alone with no partner, a testimony which is stored for the Abode of Resurrection. I testify that Muḥammad is His servant and messenger who clarified the path of guidance and accuracy, suppressed the rejectors and deniers from the people of deviation and stubbornness. May Allāh's peace and blessings be upon him, to proceed:

One time I came across the book *Minḥāj al-Qāṣidīn*<sup>7</sup> by *Shaykh al-Imām al-'Alīm al-Awḥad*, Jamāluddīn al-Jawzī (*rahimahullāh*) and I saw that it was of the most magnificent and beneficial of books containing many benefits. I came across at a certain location and I desired to obtain it and read through it. When I contemplated on it for a second time I found more than what I had thought was in it. However, I found that the book was simple and thus I wanted to comment on it in this *Mukhtaṣar* which will contain most of its intents and important aspects and benefits whether it be the clear issues mentioned in the beginning of it related to the *furū'*, as these are famous matters in the books of *fiqh* and known among the people, as the intent of the book is not to deal with those matters.<sup>1</sup>

I did not adhere to preserving the arrangement of the book and its specific terminologies, rather I mentioned some of them in a way and meaning so as to be brief. I may have mentioned a ḥadīth or something else which was relevant to it and Allāh knows best. I ask Allāh the Most Kind to bring benefit with it and from reading, listening or looking at it, and to make it sincerely for Allāh's Face, and to seal it with good for us; and to grant us success to whatever statements and actions please Him. And may Allāh overlook our shortcomings and our negligence, He is Sufficient for us and the Best Trustee of affairs.

<sup>1</sup> The intent of the book is as an admonishment, it is a work of heart softening (*raqā'iq*), *sulūk* and actions of the heart (*a'mal al-qulūb*).

## THE FIRST FOUNDATION

# On Knowledge

### Section One:

## On the Excellence of Knowledge

Allāh, the Most High, said:

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ<sup>\*</sup>

“Say: ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know?’”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 9]

And He said:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ<sup>ء</sup>

“Allāh will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees.”

[*al-Mujādilah* (58): 11]

In his commentary on the above cited verse, Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: “The scholars have degrees (*darajāt*) over the devotees

of seven hundred levels. The distance between each level and the one next to it requires a five hundred years of travelling.’

Allāh, the Most High, said:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

“Only those fear Allāh, from among His servants, who have knowledge.”

[*Fātir* (35): 28]

Mu‘āwīyah Ibn Abī Sufyān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying, “Whomever Allāh wishes well for, He gives him understanding in religion.”<sup>1</sup>

Abū Umāmah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) related: “Two men were mentioned before the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ); a worshiper and a scholar. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “The superiority of the scholar over the worshiper is like my superiority over the least of you.” Then the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Indeed, Allāh, His Angels, the inhabitants of the heavens and the earths—even the ant in its hole, even the fish—pray for the ones who teach the good to people.” Reported by Tirmidhī and ruled it as ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.<sup>2</sup>

In another ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The superiority of the scholar of the worshiper is like the superiority of the full moon over the rest of the planets. The scholars are the heirs of prophets. The prophets do not leave behind wealth for inheritance, but rather, they leave behind knowledge. Whoever acquires this knowledge, acquire abundant good fortune.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bukhārī, vol.6, p.152 and Muslim #1037.

<sup>2</sup> Tirmidhī #2686: It has a weak chain of narrators. Al-Dāramī vol.1, p.88 from Makhūl with a good mursāl chain of narrators, and vol.1, p.97-98 from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and it has also a good mursāl chain of narrators. Both reports corroborate the main ḥadīth in Tirmidhī.

<sup>3</sup> Ḥadīth ḥasan. Reported by Abū Dāwūd #3641, al-Dāramī vol.1, p.98, Aḥmad vol.5, p.196, al-Baghawī #129 and Tirmidhī #2684. It has other supporting reports that strengthen its status as in *Faṭḥ al-Bārī*, vol.1, p.169.

Ṣafwān Ibn 'Assāl (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The angels lower their wings in humility to the seeker of [Islāmic] knowledge in appreciation to the knowledge they seek.”<sup>4</sup>

In his commentary on this ḥadīth, al-Khaṭṭābī said: “There are three different views interpreting the meaning of angels lowering the wings, as follows:

- i. The first view is that the angels would spread their wings.
- ii. The second view is that it is to indicate showing humility to honour the student of knowledge.
- iii. The third view states that the angels stop flying and descend to witness and attend the knowledge session.

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) reported: The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Whoever treads on a path in search of [Islāmic] knowledge, Allāh will ease the way to Paradise for him.”<sup>5</sup>

It was supposedly reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) also said: “Whomever death overtakes while they are engaged in acquiring [Islāmic] knowledge with a view to reviving Islām with the help of it, there will be only one degree between him and the prophets in Paradise.”<sup>6</sup> And there are many reports about this topic.

Some of the wise people used to say, ‘I wish those who did not acquire knowledge knew what they are missing for the ones who acquired the knowledge have gained everything.’

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<sup>4</sup> Tirmidhī #3535, Ibn Mājah #226, Ibn Hibbān #79, *Musnad Aḥmad* vol.4, p.239-240 and Ibn Khuzaymah #193, and the report is ṣaḥīḥ.

<sup>5</sup> Muslim vol.1, p.100, Abū Dāwūd #2643 and Tirmidhī #2648.

<sup>6</sup> Reported by al-Daramī vol.1, p.100 from al-Ḥasan through a mursāl chain of narrators, Ibn al-Najjār in *‘Dhayk Tārikh Baghdād’* vol.3, p.131, al-Haythamī in *Mujama‘ al-Zawā’id* vol.1, p.123 wherein he said: it was reported by Ṭabarānī in his *Mu‘jam al-Awsaṭ* with a chain of narrators that includes Muḥammad ibn al-Ja’d who is an abandoned narrators. See *‘Ithāf al-Sādaḥ al-Muttaqin’* vol.1, p.100-101 where you will find a detailed account of the *takhrīj* of this report.

From the merits of teaching is what has been mention in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs wherein Sahl ibn Sa'd (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said to 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*): "By Allāh, for Allāh to guide one man by you is better for you than red camels."<sup>7</sup>

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'Every living being, even the fish in the sea, prays to Allāh to forgive the one who teaches the people that which is good.' In another report, the same meaning was raised to the Prophet (ﷺ).<sup>8</sup>

If one asks, why would the fish in the sea pray to Allāh to forgive the person who teaches the people all that which is good? The answer is: The benefit of knowledge extends to include everyone including the fish. This is because scholars came to know the lawful and the forbidden after they have learned, and the [Islāmic] knowledge informs them to advise people to be kind to everything including the animal when slaughtered<sup>9</sup> and the fish. It is for this reason Allāh inspired all the creatures to pray for their forgiveness to return the favor.

It was narrated that Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allāh has sent me is like abundant rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. And, another portion of the land was sterile and the rain water remained

<sup>7</sup> Bukhārī, vol.7, p.58, Muslim #2406, Abū Dāwūd #3661 on the authority of Sahl ibn Sa'd (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*). The red camels mentioned in the ḥadīth are considered the most precious wealth for Arabs who used it as an example to state that a matter is invaluable and there is nothing better than it.

<sup>8</sup> Its references have been detailed previously.

<sup>9</sup> The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allāh has commanded you to show kindness to everyone, so if you have to kill, kill in a good manner, and if you slaughter an animal, slaughter it gently."

Reported by Muslim #1955, Tirmidhī #1409, Abū Dāwūd #2815 and al-Nasā'ī vol.7, p.227 on the authority of Shaddad ibn Aws (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*).

on its surface, and Allāh benefited the people with it; they utilized it for drinking, making their animals drink from it and for irrigation of the land for cultivation. Another portion of it was barren, which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation. The first is the example of the person who comprehends Allāh's religion and gets benefit (from the knowledge) which Allāh has revealed through me; hence he learns and then teaches others. The last example is that of a person who does not care for it and does not take Allāh's guidance revealed through me (He is like that barren land)."<sup>10</sup>

Look, may Allāh engulf you with His mercy, how this ḥadīth gives [a good account] on the examples of people i.e. the example of jurists; the ones with understanding, is like the lands that accepted the rain water and then brought forth vegetation, because they learned and understood, concluded and taught others. However, the example of the scholars of ḥadīth who work as transmitters of ḥadīth without being blessed with the bliss of understanding is like a sterile land that preserved the water and so others benefited from the knowledge they have. As for the ones who heard of the knowledge but did not learn it and did not preserve it, they are the ignorant laypeople.<sup>11</sup>

Al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī], may Allāh have his mercy on him, said: 'Were it not for scholars, people would have become like animals.'

Mu'adh ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: '[O people], learn the [Islāmic] knowledge for learning it for the sake of Allāh is piety, seeking it is an act of worship, mutual study is an exaltation to Allāh, pursuing it is *jihād*, teaching it to who does not know it, is charity, and offering it to who deserves it is a way to draw close to Allāh. It is the affable in times of loneliness and the companion during one's

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<sup>10</sup> Bukhārī vol.1, p.185 and Muslim #2282.

<sup>11</sup> This is not true in all cases because most of the early scholars specialized in jurisprudence were also Scholars of ḥadīth. That said, whoever fell behind and did not reach this level then he takes the blame for that.



seclusion.’<sup>12</sup>

Ka’b (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘Allāh revealed to Prophet Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*): “O Mūsā, learn the good and teach it to people; for I will enlighten the graves of who learns it and who teaches it so they do not feel any kind of estrangement in their graves.”’

## Section Two:

### Seeking knowledge is Obligatory

Anas ibn Mālīk (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “It is obligatory (*farīḍa*) on every Muslim to seek knowledge” Reported by Aḥmad in ‘*al-‘Ilal*’<sup>13</sup>

The author of this book (may Allāh have his mercy on him) said: ‘The scholars differ regarding the types of knowledge referred to in the report.’

The Jurists (*fuqahā’*) said: ‘It refers to the knowledge of jurisprudence (*‘ilm al-fiqh*) with which the lawful (*ḥalāl*) and the unlawful (*ḥarām*) are known.’

The exegetes of the Qur’ān (*mufasssirūn*) and scholars of ḥadīth (*muḥaddithūn*) say: ‘It refers to the Qur’ān and Sunnah with which

<sup>12</sup> Some people attribute this statement to the Prophet (ﷺ) but it has not proven authentic that he said it, as in *Tanzīh al-Sharī‘ah*, vol.1, p.281 of Ibn ‘Arraq. In fact, even the report from Mu’adh is also weak i.e. Abū Nu’aym recorded it in *al-Hilyah*, vol.1, p.239 with a chain that includes an unknown narrator. See *Jamī’ Bayān al-‘Ilm*, vol.1, p.65 and *al-Jāmi’ al-Kabir*, vol.2, p.453)

<sup>13</sup> The reference is incorrect because Imām Aḥmad did not include it in “*al-‘Ilal*”. Rather, Ibn al-Jawzī narrated in ‘*al-‘Ilal al-Mutanabhiya*’, vol.1, p.66 that Imām Aḥmad said: “There is no report that we deem authentic on this topic.” However, the ḥadīth is ḥasan li-ghayriḥ because it has many routes that Ibn al-Jawzī compiled in ‘*al-‘Ilal al-Mutanabhiya*’, vol.1, p.54-66 and al-Sakhḥāwī in ‘*al-Maqāsid al-Ḥasanah*’ p.275-277, al-Zubaydī in *Sharḥ al-Iḥyā’*, vol.1, p.97-98). The ḥadīth was ruled as ḥasan by al-Mizzī, Ṣuyūṭī, al-Minnawī and al-Albānī, etc.

people can reach all the knowledge (*'ulūm*).<sup>14</sup>

The Ṣūfīs say: 'It refers to the knowledge of sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) and defects of the soul (*āfāt al-nufūs*).'

Philosophers say: 'It refers to the knowledge of rhetoric (*'ilm al-kalām*).'

These<sup>14</sup> and other opinions have been given regarding its meaning, but none of them are satisfactory. The correct interpretation is that it refers to that which a person ought to observe and fulfill to please his Lord.<sup>15</sup>

This conduct of which the servant is responsible has three categories: namely that which they must believe in (*'itiqād*), that which they must do (*fā'il*), and that which they must refrain from (*tark*).

When a child reaches puberty, the first obligation upon him is to learn the testimony of faith (*shahādah*) and what it means, even if that does not come about through analyzing the evidence. This is because the Prophet was content with the affirmation (*taṣdīq*) of the simple Bedouins that was not preceded by teaching them the evidence. This is the obligation of that specific time, though he is obliged to look into the evidence later.<sup>16</sup>

Then, when the prayer time comes, he is obliged to learn how to purify himself (*taḥārah*) and pray (*ṣalah*). If he lives till Ramaḍān, he is obliged to learn how to fast (*ṣawm*), and if he owns property for a lunar year, he is obliged to learn the rules of *zakāt*. If the time of the pilgrimage (*hajj*) comes and he is able to perform it, he is obliged

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<sup>14</sup> In other words, it includes everything that these scholars said.

<sup>15</sup> I.e. it refers to all the aforementioned opinions.

<sup>16</sup> But this is just the opinion of the rhetoric-theologians!

to learn the rules that pertain to it.

With respect to abstinence, the obligations depend on one's situation, for a blind person is not obliged to learn the things that are unlawful to look at and a mute person is not obliged to know what one must not utter with his tongue. If one is in a country where people are accustomed to drinking wine and wearing silk, he is obliged to learn that these things are unlawful.

With respect to beliefs, the obligations depend on passing thoughts (*ḵhawāṭir*) of doubt as to what the two words of the testimony of faith mean, it would be obligatory upon him to acquire the knowledge of whatever would remove that doubt. If he is in a land where blameworthy innovations are practiced, he is obliged to learn the truth, similarly if he were a merchant living in the land where the practice of usury was prevalent it would be obligatory to warn him against usury.

He must also learn the knowledge related to faith, the resurrection, Paradise and Hell.<sup>17</sup>

It is thus clear that seeking of knowledge that is individually obligatory (*farḍ 'ayn*), is that which one must currently know.

As for communal obligations (*farḍ ḵifāyah*), they are everything without which the world cannot be sustained, such as medical science, which is necessary in maintaining our bodily health, and mathematics, which is necessary in disposing inheritance, willed property, and other such things.

If a country is void of people who know these things, the entire

---

<sup>17</sup> As well as other matters of theology. Imām al-Ṭahawī collected them in a single work and Imām Ibn Abī al-'Izz al-Ḥanafī wrote a commentary on his book titled *Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah al-Ṭahawīyyah*.

population is sinful, but if a single person learns them, the rest are no longer obliged to learn them.

This being said, no one should find it strange that we categorize medicine and mathematics as communal obligations, because basic professions like farming, weaving, and even cupping are all communal obligations as well. After all, if a country is void of a cupper, it is not far from being ruined. Indeed, He who sent us the disease also sent us the medicine and guided us to use it.

As for deep and detailed study of mathematics and medicine, that is additional knowledge because the people can manage without it.

Some disciplines are merely permissible (*mubah*), such as the knowledge of poetry (*ash'ār*) that does not contain nonsense, and the knowledge of history (*tawārikh al-akhbār*).

Some disciplines are blameworthy all together, like knowledge of sorcery (*'ilm al-sihr*), talismans (*talsamāt*), and spells (*talbisāt*).

However, Islāmic knowledge with all its branches and sciences are praiseworthy. It is divided into fundamentals (*uṣūl*), branches (*furū'*), and introductory (*muqaddimāt*) and supplementary (*mutammimāt*) disciplines.

The fundamental disciplines (*uṣūl*) are the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of His Messenger, the consensus of scholars (*ijmā' al-ummah*), and the statements of the Companions (*athār al-ṣahabah*).

The branches (*furū'*) are the meanings derived from these sources, some of which are understood from the obvious wordings and others which are understood through other means. For example, it is understood [through analogy] from the Prophet's (ﷺ) words: "The

judge must not judge when angry”<sup>18</sup> that the judge must not also judge when hungry.

The introductory disciplines (*muqaddimāt*) are the tool-sciences like grammar (*nahu*) and linguistics (*lugha*), for these are tools whereby the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger are understood.

The supplementary disciplines (*mutammimāt*) are like the knowledge of Qur’ān recitations (*‘ilm al-qirā’āt*), pronunciation and articulation of Arabic letters (*makhbārīj al-hurūf*), and the names, credibility and conditions of ḥadīth narrators (*asmā’ al-rijāl al-ḥadīth*).<sup>19</sup>

These are the Islāmic sciences, and all of them are praiseworthy.

### Section Three:

## The Knowledge of Devotional Practice

The knowledge of devotional practice deals with the states of the heart (*aḥwāl al-qalb*) and that includes the states of fear (*kawf*), hope (*rajā’*), contentment (*riḍā*), truthfulness (*sidq*), and sincerity (*ikhlās*). This is the knowledge that raised the status of the renowned scholars and through mastering it made them famous like Sufyān, Abu Hanīfah, Mālik, Shāfi‘ī, and Aḥmad.

However, the reason some jurists and scholars have failed to reach the level of the aforementioned men is the fact that they have become occupied with knowledge at its superficial level without striving to grasp its true reality and act upon its in-depth meanings.

<sup>18</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13, p.120; Muslim #1717; Tirmidhī #1334; Abū Dāwūd #3589; and Nasā’ī, vol.8, p.237, on the authority of Abū Bakrah (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*).

<sup>19</sup> The truth is that this latter one belongs to the fundamentals as the Prophetic Sunnah cannot be truly known except by knowing the uprightness and conditions of the men who narrated it.

You will see a jurist talking about the *ẓihār*<sup>20</sup> and *li'an*<sup>21</sup> and the rulings of competing (*sabq*) and shooting (*ramy*)<sup>22</sup> and branching out to detailed issues that take ages to discuss without actually needing any of them<sup>23</sup>. But still you will not see him talking about sincerity and warning against showing off even though this is an individual obligation upon him and neglecting it will ruin him while the other topics he discusses are communal obligations. If someone asks this scholar about his reasons for not addressing the need for sincerity and showing off, he would not be able to provide an answer, but were he to be asked why he is occupying himself with issues of the *li'an* and shooting, he would say: "These topics are a communal obligation!" This is of course correct, but what he fails to realize is that mathematics, too, is a communal obligation, so why is he not occupied with that? The truth is that his soul has glamorized the matter for him as its desire for ostentation (*riyā'*) and fame (*sum'a*) is fulfilled through debating, not mathematics!

Know that the meanings of some words have been replaced and distorted to mean things that the pious predecessors did not mean with them. For example, today scholars have given an exclusive meaning to the word *fiqh* (understanding), using it exclusively for the science of jurisprudence and its causative factors (*'ilāh*). Even though the first generation understood the word to refer to the knowledge

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<sup>20</sup> A form of divorce by the phrase: *anti 'alayya kaẓahr ummi* (thou art to me as my mother's back). This was a pre-Islāmic practice. cf. *Sūrah al-Mujadilah*: 2; Bukhārī, #23 and Ibn Mājah, # 25.

<sup>21</sup> A form of divorce which takes place under the following circumstances: if a man accuses his wife of adultery and does not prove it by four witnesses, he must swear before Allāh that he is telling the truth and then add, "If I am a liar may Allāh curse me". The wife then says, "I swear before Allāh that my husband lies;" and then adds, "May Allāh's wrath be upon me if this man be telling the truth." After this the divorce takes place. cf. *Sūrah al-Nūr* 6; Bukhārī, #4, 25, 27-36 and Ibn Mājah, # 27.

<sup>22</sup> These are chapters of jurisprudence that can be read more about in the books of Islāmic law.

<sup>23</sup> This is far from the moderate approach of the early jurists. As for the author's era and ours as well, the situation is just like he puts it.

of the Afterlife, the details of the heart's illnesses, the nullifiers of actions, the intense awareness of this world's pettiness, the deep yearning of the bliss of the Afterlife, and making the fear of Allāh dominate the heart.

This is why al-Ḥasan,<sup>24</sup> may Allāh have mercy on him, said: "A possessor of *fiqh* (*faqih*) is one who abstains from this world and desires the Afterlife. He is a person who has insight regarding his religion and is constant in worshiping his Lord. He is cautious in fear of Allāh, refrains from violating the honour of other Muslims, abstains from their wealth, and gives them sincere advice."

They would use the word *fiqh* for the knowledge that pertains to the Afterlife more as it did not refer exclusively to passing legal verdicts which was only one of the things it covered. But this specification of the meaning has deceived some people to focus solely on legal verdicts that pertain to the outward practices of Islām and neglect the knowledge of working for the Afterlife.

The second word is *ʿilm* (knowledge); before, this word referred to knowledge about Allāh and His signs—meaning His blessings and actions that pertain to His servants—but they gave it an almost exclusive meaning and said that a person of knowledge is he who debates about matters of jurisprudence even if he is ignorant of Qurʾānic exegesis and ḥadīth.

The third word is *tawḥīd* (monotheism); this word used to refer to view that everything that happens is from Allāh in a manner that makes one to forget about means and intermediaries. The fruit of this understanding is reliance (*tawakkul*) on the Divine and contentment (*riḍā*) with His decree. But now, it refers to philosophical theology,

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<sup>24</sup> Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, may Allāh have mercy on him.

which is disapproved by the pious predecessors.<sup>25</sup>

The fourth word is reminding (*tadhkīr*) and remembrance (*dhikr*). Allāh said:

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ يَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers.”

[*al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 55]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If you pass by the gardens of Paradise graze therein.” They asked: ‘And what are the gardens of Paradise?’ so he said: “The gatherings of *dhikr*.”<sup>26</sup> They have turned this word to mean storytelling and the roaming sermons and pompous display of devotion that the gatherings of story tellers are about today.

If a person wants to relate the stories of the early people in his admonishments, he should know that most of the stories that are out there are not true, like the story that Prophet Yūsuf (‘*alayhis-salām*) loosened his waistband and saw Ya‘qūb biting his hand,<sup>27</sup> and the story that Dāwūd (‘*alayhis-salām*) told Uriya to prepare for war till he was slain.<sup>28</sup> Stories like this are but harmful.

<sup>25</sup> *Tawhīd* must remain upon the roots that can be grasped by the natural inclination (*fitra*) of man which, among other matters that one must believe in, include belief in Allāh and His lofty attributes and beautiful names and belief in the fact that He is the only true object of worship.

<sup>26</sup> Tirmidhī #3504, from Abū Hurayrah and #3505 from Anas. It is weak and not corroborated by supporting narrations or chains due to the varying wordings and the severe weakness of some of them. Refer to *Da‘if al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḡīr wa Ziyādatih* #799, 800, 801 by our teacher, the erudite scholar al-Albānī.

<sup>27</sup> This is a reference to a story attributed to Allāh’s words: “*And she certainly determined [to seduce] him, and he would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof [i.e., sign] of his Lord.*” [Yūsuf (12): 2]. Refer to *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ*, vol.5, p.295.

<sup>28</sup> A reference to the story attributed to Allāh’s words: “*Indeed this, my brother, has ninety-nine ewes, and I have one ewe.*” [Ṣād (38): 23] Refer to the commentary of *Zād al-Masīr*, vol.7, p.117.



The sermons of roaming sermons and pompous display of devotion are extremely harmful to the layman as they talk about love, being together, and the pain of separation while most of the attendants are simple folks whose hearts are filled with desires and love for imagining such things. Therefore, these stories only arouse what their souls hold within, bursting up the fire of their desires and making them shout out loud. All of this is but corruption.

Sometimes the roaming sermons contain bold claims pertaining to love of Allāh Most High, and this is severely harmful. Even a group of farmers stopped their profession completely and began making such claims.

The fifth word is *ḥikma* (wisdom), which means knowledge and acting by it.

Ibn Qutaybah, may Allāh have mercy on him, said: ‘A man is not wise (*ḥakīm*) until he combines knowledge and action upon such knowledge.’ Today, however, this word is used for doctors and astrologers.

#### Section Four: The Praiseworthy Disciplines

Know that praiseworthy (*maḥmūd*) knowledge is of two types:

1. Knowledge that deserves the utmost praise; the more one possesses it, the better: this is the knowledge about Allāh and His attributes (*ṣifāt*), actions (*afʿāl*), and wisdom in making the Afterlife follow this world. This is knowledge that is sought for its own sake and knowledge that leads to happiness (*saʿāda*) in the Afterlife. It is the bottomless ocean—men only circle around its shores and edges to the best of their ability.
2. Knowledge that is only praised to a certain degree: this is the

previously mentioned knowledge needed in fulfilling communal obligations. Knowledge of all communal obligations is needed, but it can be studied either according to need or exhaustively.

Therefore, be one of two men: a man who is busy with himself or a man who devotes his time to others after having worked on himself. Beware of focusing on fixing others before fixing yourself. Work on bettering and purifying your inner self from reprehensible characteristics like greed (*hirs*), jealousy (*hasad*), ostentation (*riyā'*), and vanity (*'ujb*), before fixing your outward conduct. This will be discussed, by the will of Allāh Most High, in the Quarter on Destructive Flaws.<sup>29</sup>

If you are not done with that do not occupy yourself with communal obligations, for there are many others who are doing that. A person who ruins himself at the expense of trying to fix others is a fool. He is like a person who has scorpions in his sleeves but focuses on driving flies away from others.

If you are finished with purifying your inner self—and what a far-fetched goal that is!—focus on communal obligations, but proceed gradually.

Begin with the Book of Allāh Mighty and Sublime, and then move on to the Sunnah of His Messenger. Then learn the sciences of the Qur'ān (*ulūm al-Qur'ān*) which, among others, include knowledge of Qur'ānic exegesis (*tafsīr*), knowledge of the abrogating (*nasikh*) and the abrogated (*mansukh*), and equivocal (*muhkam*) and unequivocal verses (*mutashabih*). The same applies to the Sunnah. After this, focus on jurisprudence and legal theory, and move on to other sciences as much as your lifespan allows.

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<sup>29</sup> cf. This is the 2nd book in this series, '*Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth—A textbook on the Ethics of Self-Discipline*' published by Dār us-Sunnah Publishers 2019.

Do not dedicate your whole life to the study of one particular discipline in hope of covering the topic exhaustively. There is a lot of knowledge out there but life is short. These disciplines are tools (*ālāt*)<sup>30</sup> whereby other things are accessed, and the ultimate goal must not be forgotten when studying things that are sought for the purpose of achieving something else.

### Section Five: Scholars that Do Not Benefit from their Knowledge

Know that debating with the purpose of winning and boasting is the source of vile character (*akhlāq al-madhmūma*). A person who does this is not safe from arrogance (*ujb*) as he belittles those with less knowledge and is amazed at himself for being above so many others in the same field. He is also not safe from ostentation (*riyā'*) because what the debaters of today mostly aim at is making people know that they won the debate. They want to be covered in praise (*madh*) and thanks (*shukr*), so they spend their whole lives learning things like the art of oration and memorizing rare information, all of which makes them better debaters but are of no benefit in the Afterlife.

It has been narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The people with the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection are the scholars who did not benefit from their knowledge.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> i.e. a means

<sup>31</sup> Tabarānī in his *Mu'jam al-Awsat*, vol.1, p.182; Ibn 'Adī, vol.5, p.1807; al-Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, from Abū Hurayrah. In its chain is 'Uthmān Ibn Miqsam who was left by many Imāms. Al-Munāwī says in *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol.1, p.518: “Al-Mundhirī declared him weak.” Ibn Hajr says: “Both its chain and text are odd.” Al-'Irāqī stated firmly that it is weak, and al-Albānī ruled in *Da'if al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghir* #968 that it is severely weak.

Section Six:

The Etiquettes of the Teacher and the Student, and  
the Adversity of Knowledge, and the Scholars of  
Evil and the Scholars of Afterlife

The student should purify his inner self (*ṭahārat al-naḥs*) from lowly characteristics (*radhā'il al-akhlāq*) and blameworthy traits (*madhmūm al-ṣifāt*) before anything else because knowledge is the worship of the heart (*'ibādat al-qalb*).

He should disassociate himself from all distractions, for when one's mind is focused on more than one thing it falls short in grasping the realities of things.

The predecessors would prefer knowledge over everything else. It has been reported that Imām Aḥmad, may Allāh have mercy on him, only married in the age of forty.

Abū Bakr al-Anbārī was gifted a slave girl, but when she came to him he was thinking about the derivation of a religious matter so she withdrew from him. Then he said: 'Take her to the slave trader.' So she asked: 'Did I do something wrong?' He replied: 'No, but my heart became distracted by you, and you are not worthy enough to prevent me from my knowledge!'

The student must surrender to the teacher like a patient surrenders to the doctor. He must humble himself before him and be at his service excessively.

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhuma*) took hold of the ride of Zayd ibn Thābit (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) and said: 'This is how we were ordered to

treat the scholars.<sup>32</sup>

If a student is too proud to learn from someone who is not famous for his knowledge, he is ignorant because for the believer, wisdom is the object of persevering quest, so he takes it wherever he finds it.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, let him leave his personal opinion for the opinion of his teacher, for a teacher's error benefits the student more than his own correctness.<sup>34</sup>

‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘One of the rights that a scholar has upon you is that after you have greeted the people in general you greet him individually. You must sit in front of him and you must not gesture with your hand or eye in his presence. You must not present frequent questions to him or present a question directly to him. Do not be stubborn in asking for an answer if he is tired and do not ask again if he refuses to answer. You must not grab his garment when he gets up. Do not spread his secrets, backbite anyone in his presence, and do not look for his mistakes. If he errs, accept his excuse. Never tell him: ‘I heard such and such say a thing,’ or: ‘Such and such differs with you.’ Do not describe another scholar in his presence. You must not turn away from accompanying him for a long time and you must not raise yourself above serving him. If he is in need of something and others fulfill his need before you, know that he is like a palm tree: you are just waiting for something to drop from it for you.’

If one wishes to learn he should not lend his ear to the differences

<sup>32</sup> Ṭabarānī and Ḥākim, and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Madkhal*. Its chain is sound. Refer to *Sharḥ al-Iḥyā*, vol.1, p.312.

<sup>33</sup> Many preachers and orators quote this statement as a Prophetic ḥadīth, but it is not a sound ḥadīth. It has been reported by Tirmidhī #2688 and Ibn Mājah #4169. The chain includes Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Faḍl al-Makhzūmī who is weak. Refer to *Da‘if al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaghir* #4306.

<sup>34</sup> The student should show the teacher his mistake with wisdom and fine preaching. This is one of the principles of our monotheistic religion.

between people, for this will only confuse him and tire his mind.<sup>35</sup> He should take the best of everything as life is not long enough for learning all the sciences. After this, he must put most of his energy into learning the noblest of all sciences, namely the knowledge that pertains to the Afterlife. This knowledge is his pathway to the certainty gained by Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) for whom Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) testified saying: “Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) has not preceded you with constant fasting or prayer. He has preceded you with something that has settled in his breast.”<sup>36</sup>

These are the duties of the student. With respect to the teacher, he has duties as well, among them the following:

He must be gentle with his students and treat them like his own sons. He must not ask money for teaching and must not expect reward or thanks. He must teach for Allāh’s sake alone. He must not see himself as doing a favor for the students, but rather it is upon him to hold them in high regard for being people who have prepared their hearts to earn the proximity of Allāh by planting the seeds of knowledge therein. They are like men who lend their lands to another for cultivation. It does not befit a teacher to ask for reward except from Allāh. To the extent, the pious predecessors used to refuse any gifts from their students.

The teacher must not be stingy in granting advice. If a student shows bad character he must express his disapproval to him indirectly as much as he can. He must not scold him out loud, for this makes

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<sup>35</sup> This is a very important advice.

<sup>36</sup> Sakhkhāwī said: ‘I do not know this (*Mukhtaṣar al-Maqāṣid*, p.169).’

Ibn al-Qayyim says in *al-Manār al-Munīf*, p. 115: ‘This is the speech of Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Ayyash.’ Ibn al-Jazarī says in *Ghāyat al-Nihāyah*, vol.1, p.327: ‘The well-known report which says: ‘Abū Bakr has not preceded you with constant prayer or fasting. He has preceded you with something that has settled in his breast’ is narrated by men with no knowledge and attributed to the Prophet. The truth is that it is a statement of Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Ayyash.’

the students lose their reverence for him.

He must consider the student's level of understanding and intellect and not delve into matters he cannot understand. It has been narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "I have been commanded to address the people according to their intellects."<sup>37</sup>

'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: "There is certain knowledge here—if only I could find people to carry it!"<sup>38</sup>

Al-Shāfi'ī said:

Should I scatter pearls for grazing camels?  
Should I poetize prose for herders of sheep?  
Who grants ignoramuses knowledge will waste it  
Who denies the deserving from it has wronged them<sup>39</sup>

The teacher must implement what he knows and not go against Allāh's words:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ  
وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

"Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture?"

[*al-Baqarah* (2):44]

<sup>37</sup> Suyūṭī says in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, #35: 'Al-Daylamī narrated it with a weak chain from Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*). I say: Refer to *Ithāf al-Sādah al-Muttaqin*, vol.1, p.342-343. Bukhārī mentions a suspended report in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol.1, p.199 from 'Alī that says: "Talk to the people in a way that they can understand. Or do you want Allāh and His Messenger to be belied?" Muslim narrates in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (with the commentary of al-Nawawī, vol.1, p.76 from Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*): "You do not address the people with something that their minds cannot grasp but it will be a test to some of them."

<sup>38</sup> This is the text found in *al-Ihyā'*, vol.1, p.57 and its commentary, vol.1, p.343. And in the Shāmiyyah edition: "*law aṣabtu lahu ḥamalatab*," which is a meaningless mistranscription.

<sup>39</sup> In his *Dirwān*, p. 124-126. Refer to: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol.17, p.307; *Jāmi' al-Bayān al-'Ilm*, vol.1, p.110; *al-Fihyah*, vol.9, p.153; and *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī*, vol.2, p.72.

‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Two types of men have broken my back (i.e. their actions are horrible): a violating scholar and a devotional ignoramus.’

Section Seven:

## The Adversity of Knowledge, and the Scholars of Evil and the Scholars of Afterlife

Scholars of evil (*‘ulamā’ al-sū’*) are those use their knowledge to gain worldly enjoyment and reach a high position with those who can grant it. Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever learns knowledge that is used to earn the pleasure of Allāh only for some worldly gain, he will not smell the fragrance of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>40</sup>

Another ḥadīth says: “He who learns knowledge to compete with the scholars, dispute with the foolish, or turn people’s faces towards him, is in the Fire (Tirmidhī).”<sup>41</sup> There are many other traditions on this as well.

Some of the predecessors have said: ‘He who regrets the most when death comes is the neglectful scholar (*‘ālim al-mufarriṭ*).’

Know that a scholar is obliged to observe his Islāmic obligations and abstain from the forbidden. Even though he should refrain from

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<sup>40</sup> Abū Dāwūd #2657; Ibn Mājah #252; Aḥmad, vol.2, p.338; Ibn Ḥibbān, #89 (*Mawarid*); al-Khaṭīb: *Iqṭiḍa’ al-‘Ilm wa al-‘Amal*, #102. Its chain includes Fulayh Ibn Sulayman who has weakness in him, but Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Barr corroborates it in *Jāmi’ al-Bayān al-‘Ilm wa Fadlīb*, vol.1, p.190, and it is supported by what follows it, whereby the ḥadīth is ḥasan.

<sup>41</sup> Tirmidhī #2656, from Ka’b Ibn Mālīk (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Its chain is weak but it is corroborated by the narrations of Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), #253 and Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), #254 in the collection of Ibn Mājah, which makes the ḥadīth ḥasan.



worldly pleasures as much as possible, he is not obliged to abstain from worldly enjoyments and things that are permissible (*mubāḥāt*). People differ in this regard and not all bodies are able to remain distracted.

It has been narrated that Sufyān al-Thawrī would eat well and say: 'If the beast is not given abundant fodder it does not work.'

Imām Aḥmad, on the other hand, may Allāh have mercy on him, would endure harsh living conditions to a great extent. The natures of people vary.

The scholars of Afterlife know that this world is worthless and the Afterlife is a noble abode, and that they are like two wives of man. Such scholars prefer the Afterlife and their actions do not contradict their words. Favoring the knowledge with the greatest benefits, they are inclined towards knowledge that benefits them in the Afterlife and shun away from knowledge that is of little use. It has been narrated that Shaqīq al-Balkhī told al-Ḥātim: 'You have accompanied me for a while now. What have you learned?' Al-Ḥātim said: "Eight things:

- i. The first: I looked at the creation and found that everyone has a beloved (*maḥbūb*). When they go to their graves, they depart their beloved, so I made my good deeds my beloved so that they could be with me in my grave (*qabr*).

- i. The second: I looked at the words of Allāh:

وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ

"And prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination."

[*al-Nāẓi'āt* (79): 40]

and strove to repel this lowly inclination till it became settled in obedience to Allāh.

- iii. The third: I saw that everyone who owns something that he holds valuable tries to protect it. Then I looked at the words of Allāh:

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

“Whatever you have will end, but what God has is ever lasting.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 96]

so every time I owned something of value, I directed it to Him so that it may remain mine with Him.

- vi. The fourth: I saw that people refer to money, nobility, and honour, which are all nothing. Then I looked at the words of Allāh:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ

“Indeed, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most righteous.”

[*al-Hujarāt* (49):13]

and worked deeds of righteousness in order to be noble before Him.

- v. The fifth: I saw that people are jealous of each other. Then, I looked at the words of Allāh:

وَحَنَ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ

“We who have apportioned among them their livelihood.”

[*al-Zukhruf* (43): 32]

I left jealousy.

- vi. The sixth: I saw them having enmity towards each other. Then I looked at the words of Allāh:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا

“Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy.”

[*Fāṭir* (35): 6]

and stopped having enmity towards them and made Satan my only enemy.

vii. The seventh: I saw that they humiliate themselves in their quest for provisions. Then I looked at the words of Allāh:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

‘And there is no creature on earth but that upon God is its provision

[*Hūd* (11):6]

and focused on His rights upon me and left my property to Him.

viii. The eighth: I saw that they rely on their businesses, manufacture, and bodily health, so I relied on Allāh.’

Scholars whose goal is the Afterlife should withdraw from the Sultans and stay away from their presence.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> These are important principles, so remember them.

## THE SECOND FOUNDATION

# On the Inner Secrets<sup>1</sup> of Purification

### Section One:

## On the Ranks of Purifying

Know that purity (*ṭahārah*) has four stages (*marātib*):

- i. The first stage is the purification of the appearance (*ṭaḥhīr al-ẓāhir*) from ritual impurity (*aḥḍāth*), filth (*anjās*), and waste (*faḍalāt*).
- ii. The second stage is the purification of the limbs (*ṭaḥhīr al-jawāriḥ*) from sins (*dhunūb*) and crimes (*athām*).
- iii. The third stage is the purification of the heart (*ṭaḥhīr al-qalb*) from blameworthy traits (*akhlāq al-madhmunā*) and despised conduct (*radhā'il al-mamqūtata*).
- iv. The fourth stage is the purification of the inmost self (*ṭaḥhīr*

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'Inner Secrets' does not mean that it is special hidden knowledge only known to elite few but rather the general masses of people are not familiar with it. The knowledge is well documented in the works of the *Salaf* and known by the scholars of Islām. Just as knowledge of humility of prayer (*khushū'*), its virtues, its obstacles and how to reach it are not known by the vast number people nonetheless the knowledge of it is available to whoever desire to learn it.

*al-sirr*) from everything except Allāh.

The fourth stage is the supreme goal (*ghāyat al-qaswā*). Those with strong insight (*baṣīr*) reach it while the blind understand nothing but the first level of purity. Accordingly, you see such men waste most of their precious time in going overboard with washing their private parts (*istinjā*) and garments, thinking—because of devilish whisperings (*waswasa*) and lack of knowledge (*ilm*)—that this alone is the purity that one most achieve.<sup>2</sup> Such men are ignorant of the way of the early Muslims who spent most of their time in purifying their hearts while not being so strict about the apparent side. It has been narrated that ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) once performed the ablution from a clay vessel of the Christians, though they barely washed off the offensive smell from their hands, prayed on bare ground, walked barefooted, and only used stones to cleanse themselves after using the lavatory.

These days, where a certain group of people who consider their ornamentation (*ru‘ūnah*) equivalent to cleanliness (*naẓāfah*), you see them spending most of their time in beautifying their appearances while their inner selves lie in ruins, filled by the filth of arrogance (*kibr*), vanity (*ujb*), ignorance (*jahl*), ostentation (*riyā*), and hypocrisy (*nifāq*). Should they see a person cleansing himself with mere stones, or walking barefooted, or praying on bare ground, or performing ablution from an old vessel, they would rebuke him severely, call him filthy, and refuse to eat in his company.

Observe how they regard asceticism (*badhādhab*) in dress, which is a part of belief,<sup>3</sup> filth; while ornamentation they consider cleanliness.

<sup>2</sup> This being said, the tribulation of devilish whisperings has afflicted many people today, so take heed!

<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Shabbiness (*badhādhab*) is part faith.” This is a ḥasan ḥadīth, narrated by Abū Dāwūd #4161 and Ibn Mājah #4118 from Abū Umāmah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Our Shaykh, the erudite scholar Muhammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī declared the latter fair in *al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* #341.

See then how the evil has become good, and the good evil! But if one intends cleanliness with this purity and does not waste water and believe that using a lot of it is a fundamental part of religion (*aṣl al-dīn*), it is not wrong but quite the contrary. As for the different types of filth and ritual impurities, the books of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) should be consulted for more information on them, as the subject of this book is virtuous conduct (*ādāb*).

## Section Two:

### On Purifying the External

With respect to removing waste, one should know that waste is of two types:

1. Removable dirt, like that which gathers up in the hair: It is recommended to wash the hair and then comb and oil it to remove its scruffiness. Similarly, it is recommended to remove the dirt from the ears and the nose.

One is encouraged to use the *ṣiwāk* and rinse his mouth to remove the yellowness of the teeth and the tongue. He should also wash his knuckles and the dirt that gather around his body because of sweat and road dust. All of this is removed by the ritual bathing (*ghuṣl*).

Going to the hot bath is fine as that removes the filth more effectively and a number of the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) did so. However, one must make sure that others do not gaze at his nakedness or touch it, and when he feels the heat, he should remind himself of the heat of Hell. This is because a believer's thoughts are always engaged in the matters of this world in a way that reminds him of what is in the Afterlife, for a believer is occupied with his Afterlife-and every vessel flows over with that which it holds. Do you not see that if a draper, a carpenter, a builder, and a weaver would all

enter a house, the draper would gaze at the furniture and think about its price, the weaver would look at the fabrics of the garments, the carpenter would evaluate the ceiling, and the builder would look at the walls? This is how a believer is also: when he sees darkness, he remembers the grave (*qabr*), if he hears a frightening sound, he remembers the blowing to the horn (*ṣūr*), and upon seeing bliss (*na'im*), he remembers the bliss of Paradise (*na'im al-jannah*) and upon seeing torment, he remembers Hell (*nār*).

It is disliked to enter a hot bath if the time of the Sunset Prayer is close and between it and the Evening Prayer, for these are the times when the devils spread out.

2. Removable parts, like cutting the moustache, plugging the armpits, shaving the pubic region, and clipping the nails. It is disliked to plug gray hair while dying it is recommended.<sup>4</sup>

The other levels of purity shall be discussed in the books '*The Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*' and '*The Purification of the Soul*', if Allāh Most High wills.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> With matters like henna

<sup>5</sup> Both published by Dār us-Sunnah Publishers

## THE THIRD FOUNDATION

# On the Inner Secrets of the Prayer

### Section One:

## The Excellence of the Prayer

Prayer is the pillar of the religion (*‘imād al-dīn*) and the finest form of obedience (*gurra al-tā‘āt*). Many well-known reports have been narrated about the excellences of prayer. One of the most beautiful traits a praying person should have is humility and submission (*khushū’*).

‘Uthmān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There is no man to whom (the time of) a prescribed prayer comes and who then takes good care of its ablution, submission, and bowing, but it is an expiation (*kafāra*) for the sins that preceded it, as long as he does not commit a major sin. This is true at all times.”<sup>1</sup>

He also narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever performs two units of prayer without the distractions of any worldly thoughts,

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim #228.



his past sins are forgiven.”<sup>2</sup>

When Ibn al-Zubayr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) stood up to pray, he was like a piece of wood in his concentration and humility. When he would prostrate, the sparrows would land on his back taking him for nothing but a base of a wall. One day, when he was praying by the *Hijr*<sup>3</sup>, a stone from a catapult was flung where he was, ripping off a part of his garment, yet he did not turn away from his prayer.

Maymūn Ibn Mihrān said: ‘I never saw Muslim Ibn Yasār looking elsewhere in his prayer. Once, a part of the *masjid* collapsed and the people of the *baṣṣār* were frightened by that, but he was still praying in the *masjid* and did not look away from his prayer. When he would enter his house, his family would become silent, but when he would begin praying, they would talk and laugh.

When ‘Alī Ibn al-Ḥusayn<sup>4</sup> (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) would perform ablution he would turn yellow. He was once asked: ‘What is this that happens to you during ablution?’ and he replied: ‘Do you know before whom I am about to stand?’

Know that prayer contains pillars (*arqān*), obligations (*wajībāt*), and recommendations (*sunan*), and its spirit is in intention (*niyya*), sincerity (*ikhlās*), humility (*khushū*), and presence of heart (*ḥaḍūr al-qalb*). This is because prayer comprises words of remembrance (*adhkār*), communication (*munājāb*) with Allāh, and bodily actions (*aḥwāl*). If the heart is not present the purpose of the remembrance and communication cannot be fulfilled, because utterances that do not express the heart are considered mere rigmarole. The purpose of

<sup>2</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.223; Muslim #226; Abū Dāwūd, #106, 107; and Nasā’ī, vol.1, p.64.

<sup>3</sup> The “broken wall” of the Ka’bah.

<sup>4</sup> In *al-Iḥyā’* and its commentary: “‘Alī Ibn al-Ḥusayn,” as we have written here, and this is correct. The shamiyya edition reads: “‘Alī Ibn al-Ḥasan (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*).”

the actions is not fulfilled either if the heart is not present since the purpose of standing (*qiyām*) is servitude and the purpose of bowing (*rukūʿ*) and prostrating (*sujūd*) is humility (*dull*) and reverence (*taʿẓīm*); if intention is taken away from actions, only meaningless movements remain. Allāh says:

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَافُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ النَّقْوَى  
مِنْكُمْ

“Their meat will not reach God, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you.”

[*al-Hajj* (22):37]

In other words, what carries one to Allāh Exalted and Most High is that which takes over the heart and makes one abide by the orders he has been given. Therefore, presence of heart is a necessary part of prayer. However, the Lawgiver has pardoned absentmindedness (*ghafla*) that occurs during the prayer, for if one concentrates in its first part he is considered to have concentrated in the remaining parts as well.

There are many things that bring life to the prayer (*ḥayāt al-ṣalāh*), among them the following:

1. Presence of heart (*ḥaḍūr al-qalb*), as we have mentioned, which means ridding the heart of everything that is not related to the act of worship at hand. What leads to this is concern (*ḥamm*), for when you are concerned about a matter your heart will be automatically present. Therefore, the only way to create presence of heart is to direct one’s concern towards the prayer. The strength and weakness of this concern depends on the strength of one’s faith (*īmān*) in the Afterlife and in the worthlessness (*ibtiqār*) of this world. So if you notice that your heart is not present in the prayer, know that it is because your faith is weak (*daʿf*). You must work hard to strengthen it.

2. Understanding (*tafahhūm*) what is being said. This is something more than just presence of heart, for it may happen that one's heart is present with the words but not their meanings. Therefore, one must focus his mind (*dahn*) on understanding (*idrāḳ*) what is being said by repelling distractive thoughts (*ḵhawāṭir*) and also eliminating their causes, for if the causes do not cease to exist the thoughts about them will continue.

These causes are either external (*ẓābir*), which means everything that preoccupies the hearing (*samʿ*) and sight (*baṣr*), or internal (*bāṭin*), such as worries (*ḥammūm*) that take one's mind here and there in the valleys of worldly life. The latter is more difficult as it does not keep one focused on only one thing. Lowering the gaze (*ghadd al-baṣr*) does not help here as that which happens in the heart alone is enough to keep him distracted.

The remedy of external causes is to eliminate everything that distracts the hearing and sight. One should pray near the *qiblah*, look at the place of prostration, not pray in a spot with carvings, and get rid of anything that distracts his senses. When the Prophet (ﷺ) once prayed in a *ḵhamisa* (a type of garment)<sup>5</sup> with ornamental borders he took it off and said: "It distracted me a while ago from my prayer."<sup>6</sup>

The remedy of internal causes is to force (*qahr*) the self to focus on what is being read in prayer and occupy it with that from everything else. One should prepare for that before commencing the prayer by finishing whatever he is doing and striving to vacating (*tafrīgh*) the heart [of all distractions]. He should remind himself of the Afterlife, the gravity of standing before Allāh, and the terror of the station

<sup>5</sup> In the Shāmīyyah edition: "In an Anbajānī garment," but what I have confirmed here is correct.

<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.406; Muslim #557; Mālik, vol.1, p.97; Abū Dāwūd, #914 and #4052; and Nasāʾī, vol.2, p.72, from 'A'ishah (*radīy-Allāhu 'anhā*).

of the Day of Resurrection. If the thoughts do not come to rest by this, he must know that he is only thinking about things that are of concern to him and things he desires, so let him abandon those desires (*shahawāt*) and sever those connections (*‘alā’iq*).

Know that when an illness (*‘illa*) has become well rooted, only strong medicine helps. When a disease is strong, it keeps pulling the praying person who in turn tries to repel it until the prayer ends in that state of contention. This is like a man who sits under a tree in order to clear his mind, but the sound of the sparrows keeps disturbing him so he drives them away with a stick that he has in his hand. The sparrows fly away but just as his mind is about to settle, they come back and occupy him again. He is then told: “This will never stop. If you want to get rid of the problem, cut the tree.” The tree of desires is the same; when it grows high and spreads its branches it attracts one’s thoughts just like a tree attracts sparrows and filth attracts flies. This makes one waste his life in repelling something that cannot be repelled. The reason behind these thoughts (*afkār*) is the love of this world.

‘Āmir Ibn ‘Abd Qays was asked: ‘Do you fall into self-talk about some worldly matters while praying?’ so he replied: ‘I would rather be struck with spear-heads than notice myself doing that.’

Know that eliminating the heart’s love for this world is difficult (*ṣa’b*) and having it is rarely removed completely, so do your best in to remove what you can. Allāh is the granter of success and the provider of assistance.

3. Glorifying and revering Allāh (*al-ta’ẓīm lillāh wa’l-hayba*), which originates from two things: knowing the Sublimity (*jalāl*) and Might (*‘azma*) of Allāh Most High and knowing the worthless-

ness of the self (*ḥaqāra al-naḥs*) and the fact that it is subdued. In other words, glorifying and revering Allāh originates from two types of knowing: submissive humility (*ḥushūʿ*) and yielding (*istikāna*).

What also gives life to the prayer is hope (*rajāʿ*), for it is something additional to fear (*kanf*). After all, many men glorifies a king and reveres him in fear of his punishment but also hopes for his benevolence.

The praying person should hope for a reward for his prayer and also have fear of being punished for his negligence.

A person should have presence of heart in all parts of the prayer. When he hears the muezzin, he should imagine the call to stand before the Lord and get ready to answer it. Let him consider well how he is going to answer and with what kind of body he is going to attend. When he covers his nakedness, he should know that he is now hiding the shameful parts of his body from the creation. Once he realizes this, let him remember the nakedness of his inner self and the shamefulness that lies within that is only known to the Creator. This nakedness cannot be covered from Him, and its expiation is regret (*nadm*), bashfulness (*ḥayāʿ*), and fear (*kanf*).

When he faces the *qiblah*, he turns his face away from all other directions (*jibāt*) to the direction (*jiba*) of Allāh's house, exalted be He, so it is even more important that he turns his heart towards Allāh Himself. And just as he turns away from everything else upon turning towards the House, his heart should also turn away from everything else upon turning to Allāh.

When you say "*Allāhu akbar*"<sup>7</sup> make sure that your heart does not

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<sup>7</sup> Allāh is the greatest.

belie your tongue, for if your heart holds something greater than Allāh Most High, you have lied. Beware of considering your desires greater (than Him) by finding that you would rather obey them than obey Allāh.

When you say “*A‘udhu billāhi min al-shaytān al-rajīm*”<sup>8</sup> know that this sentence entails betaking oneself to Him for protection. If you do not do this in your heart your speech has no meaning.

Then understand what you recite and focus with your heart when you say:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

“All Praises and thanks are due to Allāh, the Lord of all Worlds”,

Remember His gentleness (*latf*) when you recite:

الرَّحْمٰنُ الرَّحِيْمُ

“The All-Merciful (*al-Rahmān*), The Most Merciful (*al-Rahīm*)”,

and His might (*‘azma*) when you recite:

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

“Master of the Day of Judgement”

Apply this (way of pondering) to everything you recite.

It has been narrated that when Zurāra Ibn Afwā<sup>9</sup> (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) once read in his prayer:

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<sup>8</sup> I seek refuge in Allāh from the cursed Satan

<sup>9</sup> In the Shāmīyyah edition: “Zurāra Ibn Abī Awfā,” but what we have confirmed is correct. The narration is in *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā’*, vol.2, p.258. Its chain includes ‘Awn Ibn Dhakwān of whom al-Dāraqutnī said: “Abandoned.”

فَإِذَا نُفِثَ فِي النَّافُورِ ﴿٨﴾

“And when the trumpet is blown.”

[*al-Mudaththir* (74):8],

he collapsed and died. This was because he imagined what the situation will be like, and that caused his demise.

When you bow (*rukūʿ*), make yourself feel humility (*tawāḍuʿ*), and feel especially humble (*dhull*) when you prostrate, for you have now put the self in its proper place and returned the branch to the root by prostrating on the dirt it was created from. Try to understand (*tafah-hum*) and taste (*dhawq*) the meaning of the words of remembrance.

Know that performing the prayer with observance of these internal conditions (*shurūṭ al-bāṭin*) leads to the heart's purity (*jalā' al-qalb*) from rustiness (*sadā'*) and the appearance of the light (*haṣūl al-anwār*) whereby the greatness of the worshiped (*ma'būd*) is perceived and His secrets (*asrār*) are gazed upon. But only those who know understand this. As for those who engage in performing the exterior actions of the prayer without focusing on their meanings, they do not gaze at anything from that-in fact, they deny that such things even exist.

Section Two:

On the Etiquettes of Friday (*yawm al-jumm'ah*) and  
the Friday Prayer (*ṣalāt al-jumm'ah*)

The etiquettes comprise fifteen modes of conduct:

FIRST, is that he prepares for the Friday observance on Thursday the night preceding Friday (*layl al-jumm'ah*) by cleansing his body, washing his clothes, and preparing whatever should be prepared.

SECONDLY, to bathe on Friday as mentioned in the ḥadīth reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs<sup>10</sup> and other collections. It is preferable to do this a little before heading out to the prayer.

THIRDLY, one should beautify himself by cleansing the body, clipping the nails, using the *siwāk*, and removing waste as we have explained earlier. He should also use perfume and wear his best clothes.

FOURTHLY, he should set out to the *masjid* early, on foot, walking in a calm (*sukūn*) and humble manner (*khushū'*) and intending ritual seclusion (*i'tikāf*) in the *masjid* as long as he is inside the *masjid*.

FIFTHLY, one should not pass over the necks of the people or separate two people from each other. If, however, he sees an empty spot, he can walk over their necks to reach it.

SIXTHLY, he should not pass in front of a praying person.

SEVENTHLY, is that he seeks the first row unless he sees or hears something wrong in which case he is excused.

EIGHTHLY, is that one cuts off one's voluntary prayer or reciting words of remembrance when the Imām comes out (to ascend

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<sup>10</sup> The ḥadīth of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The bathing of Friday is obligatory on everyone who has seen a wet dream (i.e. on everyone who has reached puberty)." This has been reported by Bukhārī, vol.2, p.298), Muslim #846 and others.



the pulpit)<sup>11</sup> and should now occupy himself with answering the muezzin and listening to the sermon.

NINTHLY, he should perform voluntary prayers after the Friday Prayer: if he wishes, two prayer units, and if he wishes, four or six.

TENTHLY, is that he remains at the *masjid* until he performs the ‘*asr* pray, and if he should remain until the Sunset one, that would be most excellent.

ELEVENTH, he should look for the honourable moment (*al-sā‘at al-sharīfā*) of Friday with presence of heart and continuous remembrance. The scholars have differed on (the timing of) this hour:

It occurs in the collection of Muslim, in a ḥadīth of Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that it is between the sitting of the Imām and the completion of the prayer.<sup>12</sup>

Another ḥadīth says that it is between the ending of the sermon (*khuṭba*) and the completion of the prayer.<sup>13</sup>

A ḥadīth narrated by Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) says that it is the last hour after the ‘*Aṣr* prayer.<sup>14</sup>

A ḥadīth narrated by Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) says: “Look for it

<sup>11</sup> It is better to complete (the act of worship), unlike the author, may Allāh have mercy on him, stated.

<sup>12</sup> Muslim #853; and Abū Dāwūd, #489. The scholars have criticized its chain as defective due its brokenness (*inqiṭā‘*) and inconsistency (*idtirāb*). Some of them ruled that it is halted (*mawqūf*). Refer to *Fath al-Bārī*, vol.2, p.359.

<sup>13</sup> Tirmidhī, #490, from ‘Amr Ibn ‘Awf (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Its chain includes Kathir Ibn ‘Abdullāh whom some scholars have accused of lying. The ḥadīth says: “It is when the Imām gets up.” Its chain is weak (*Sharḥ al-Iḥyā’*, vol.3, p.280).

<sup>14</sup> Abū Dāwūd, #1048; Nasā’ī, vol.3, p.99; and Ḥākim, vol.1, p.279. It’s chain is ḥasan.

between the 'Aṣr prayer and sunset (*guruḥ al-shams*)."<sup>15</sup>

Abū Bakr al-Athram said: "There are two possibilities with respect to these ḥadīths: either some of them are sounder than others or this moment changes like the Night of Power (*layl al-qadr*) changes in the last ten days of Ramaḍān."<sup>16</sup>

TWELFTH, he should send abundant prayers (*ṣalāt*) upon the Prophet (ﷺ) on this day. It has been narrated that he (ﷺ) said: "Whoever sends prayers upon me eighty times on this day, Allāh forgives (for him) the sins of eighty years."<sup>17</sup> One should add seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*) to this, as it is recommended on this day.

THIRTEENTH, he should recite *Sūrah al-Kahf*, for it has been narrated that 'A'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anha*) reported from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ): "Should I tell you about a chapter whose greatness fills what is between heaven and earth? He who writes it gets a similar reward and whoever reads it on Friday, his sins between that and the next Friday and three additional days are forgiven. If someone reads the five last verses of it when going to sleep, Allāh awakens him at any part of the night he wishes." They said: "Yes, O Allāh's Messenger!" so he said: "*Sūrah al-Kahf*."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Tirmidhī, #489. There is weakness in its chain, but it is corroborated by the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated by Mālik, vol.1, p.108; Nasā'ī, vol.3, p.114; Tirmidhī, #491; and Abū Dāwūd, #1046, with a sound chain. A ḥadīth is also reported from him by Aḥmad, vol.2, p.311. Its chain is weak, though our Shaykh al-Albānī declared it fair in *al-Miskhāt* #1360.

<sup>16</sup> And this is questionable!

<sup>17</sup> Al-Sakhāwī related this in *al-Qawl al-Badī* #194 and attributed it to al-Taymī in *al-Tarḡhib* as well as to Abū'l-Shaykh and al-Daylamī. Its chain is weak. Refer to *Sharḥ al-Iḥyā'*, vol.3, p.286.

<sup>18</sup> Al-Shawkānī mentioned it in *al-Fawa'id al-Majmū'ā fi'l-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū'ā*, p. 311, and said: "It is a long but forged ḥadīth."

Another ḥadīth that has been reported says: “He who recites it on Friday or the night of Friday (i.e. the night preceding Friday) will be protected from trials.”<sup>19</sup>

It is recommended to recite a lot of Qur’ān on Friday. If one is able, he is encouraged to complete its recital on that day or its night (i.e. the night preceding it).

FOURTEENTH, he should give charity on Friday as much as he can afford, and he should do this outside the *masjid*.

It is recommended to perform the Prayer of Exaltation (*ṣalāt al-tasbīh*)<sup>20</sup> on Friday.

FIFTEENTH, he should dedicate Friday for the actions of the Afterlife and not engage in worldly work.

### Section Three:

## On the Supererogatory Prayers

Know that the performances of the Worship that are not *fard*, obligatory, are divided into three parts: the *Sunnah* prayers, the recommended prayers (*mustahabb*), and the voluntary prayers (*taṭawwuʿ*).

We mean by the Sunnah, those of which it is handed down from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) that, he consistently performed them, such as the fixed prayers (*rawātib*), following the fard prayers, and the *witr* prayer and *duḥā* prayers.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibn Mardawayh and al-Diya related it in al-Mukhtara as stated in al-Durr al-Manthur, 4/209. This ḥadīth is most likely weak.

<sup>20</sup> Many scholars consider the chain of the ḥadīth about this prayer as sound. Refer to al-Laknawi’s al-Athar al-Marfu’a fi al-Akhbar al-Mawdu’a, pp. 123-143, where the author has covered the matter exhaustively.

We mean by the *mustahabb*, the prayers proved excellence (*faḍl*) by the Prophetic tradition but which the Prophet (ﷺ) did not perform on a regular basis, such as the prayer upon entering and leaving one's house.

We mean by the *tatawwu'*, voluntary prayers and other prayers that have not been mentioned in the Prophetic tradition but which the servant can perform as supererogatory devotion.

These three categories are called supererogatory prayers or *nawāfil* (single *nafl*) prayers, for the Arabic word *nafl* means addition, and they are an addition to the obligatory prayers (*farā'id*).

Know that the best voluntary devotion of the body is the prayer.

The types of supererogatory prayers and their excellences are well-known and mentioned in the books of jurisprudence and other works, but we will mention the Prayer of Exaltation (*ṣalāt al-tasbīh*) as some people may not know how it is performed:

'Ikrimah narrates from Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhuma*) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to al-'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*): "My uncle! Should I not give you (or teach you)..." he then mentioned the entire ḥadīth until he reached the part where the Prophet (ﷺ) says: "Pray four prayer-units and recite the Opening of the Book (*al-Fātiḥah*) and some other chapter in each one. When you are standing after finishing the recitation of the first prayer-unit, say:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ

'Subḥān Allāh, wal ḥamdu lillāh, wa lā ilāha ill Allāh, wa Allāhu akbar"

fifteen times. Then bow and say the same in that posture ten times. Then raise your head from the bowing and say it ten times. Then

fall prostrate and say it in that posture ten times. Then raise your head from the prostration and say it ten times. Then prostrate and say it ten times. Then raise your head from the prostration and say it ten times before standing up. That is seventy five. Do this in four prayer-units, and if you can pray it once a day, do so. If you do not do so, pray it once every Friday. If you do not do that, then once every month, and if you do not do that, then once every year, and if you do not do that either, then once in a lifetime”<sup>21</sup>

#### Section Four:

### On the Times When Praying is Forbidden

At times when offering prayers is unlawful (*nahy*), one must not perform voluntary prayers that have no (prior) reason, like the Prayer of Exaltation (*ṣalāt al-tasbīh*). This is because the prohibition of performing prayer at these times is an emphasized one and since these prayers are weak (in relation to the prohibition), they cannot be given precedence. As for prayers that have a (prior) reason, like the Greeting of the *Masjid* (*ṭaḥiyyatal-masjid*), the Eclipse Prayer (*ṣalāt al-kuṣūf*), and the Rain Prayer (*ṣalāt al-istisqāʾ*), there are two reports regarding them.

Know that there are three reasons behind the prohibition of praying in the three times:

1. To abstain from imitating the sun worshipers (*ʿibbād al-shams*).
2. To take heed of the warning against prostrating to the Devil’s horn (*qarn al-shayṭān*), for the sun appears with the Devil’s horn and separates from it upon rising. At midday, it joins it again and separates from it upon going down. Then, when sunset is near, it joins it again and separates from it upon setting.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See previous comment.

<sup>22</sup> This is the correct view as confirmed by our Shaykh, the erudite scholar al-Albānī, in *Silsilah Ahādith as-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #314.

3. Since those who walk in the path of the Afterlife are constantly engaged in worship and continuous performance of one thing leads to fatigue and boredom, a time of prohibition makes the worshipper energetic. This is because the self is always eager to do what it is not allowed to do. Thus, the worshiper has been forbidden from prayer, but not from other types of worship like reciting the Qur'ān and glorifying Allāh, so that he might move from one state to another. This is just like the prayer itself which consists of different actions like standing (*qiyām*), sitting (*qa'ūd*), bowing (*rukū'*), and prostrating (*sujūd*).

And Allāh knows best.

## THE FOURTH FOUNDATION

# On the Inner Secrets of Almsgiving

*Zakāh* is one of the pillars of Islām. Allāh Exalted and Most High mentions it together with the prayer in His words:

وَأَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

“And establish prayer and give *zakāh*.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2):43]

With respect to the types and categories of *zakāh* and what makes it obligatory, these are well-known and can be found in the books of jurisprudence (*fiqh*). The aspects that we will focus on here are related to its requisites (*shurūṭ*) and etiquettes (*ādāb*).

One of the requisites, according to the correct view, is that *zakāh* is paid in what is mentioned in the divine texts instead of paying its value in money. This is because those who permit paying its value only consider the aim of stopping poverty while that is not the only aim of *zakāh*. This is because legal obligations are of three types:

1. Sheer worship (with no apparent reason behind it) like throwing the pebbles (during the pilgrimage). The purpose of prescribing such laws is to test the servants and manifest their servitude (*'ubūdiyya*) through performing that which does not have an apparent purpose behind it. This is because the nature of humans is apt to doing what resonates with it; therefore the purity of one's servitude is not manifested thereby. This is not the case with acts of sheer worship.
2. The opposite of the above: what is not sheer worship but rather the purpose of it is sheer delivery of someone's share, like settling people's debts and returning stolen property. Neither intention (*niyyah*) nor action (*fa'ʿl*) is of importance in this case so long as the legal obligation is fulfilled i.e. it does not matter how people are delivered their rights as long as they get them. These two types do not overlap.
3. A combination of the above two: that which aims to test the worshiper (*'ibad*) and at the same time deliver the servants their share. Thus, this combines the sheer worship entailed by the throwing of the pebbles and the worldly share that comes when people are delivered their rights. The more delicate of the two-sheer worship-must not be forgotten; in fact, it might be safe to say that the more delicate one has the most significance. *Zakāh* is of this type i.e. the share of the needy is delivered to stop poverty and one's obedience to the details in religion prescribing the way to spend it is about sheer worship. From this angle, *zakāh* is joined with *ṣalāh* and *ḥajj*.

Allāh knows best.



Section One:

## On the Details of the Inward Rules of the *Zakāh*

Know that he who seeks the road of the Afterlife through the *zakāh* has certain duties (*waḥā'if*) to fulfil. These are as follows:

THE FIRST DUTY is to understand the purpose behind *zakāh*, which is three matters: the first is testing those who claim to love Allāh by giving away what they love; the second is to purify oneself from miserliness (*bukhl*) which is one of the destructive matters and the third meaning is expressing thankfulness (*shukr*) for the blessing (*ni'ma*) of wealth

THE SECOND DUTY is secrecy (*sirr*). It is farther removed from the desire to be seen (*riyā'*) and heard (*sam'a*). Giving it openly also humiliates the poor (*faqīr*), but if he fears that secrecy will make people accuse him of not paying it, he should give it openly to the poor who do not mind taking it in front of everyone and then give to others in secret.

THE THIRD DUTY is that he must not ruin his *zakāh* by thinking he has done a favor (*mann*) and by causing harm (*adha*), for this might happen when one sees himself as being good and gracious towards the poor. Were he to consider the matter with care, he would realize that the poor person is the real good doer by accepting Allāh's right that purifies the payer.

If he also keeps in mind that giving *zakāh* is a way of giving thanks for the blessing of wealth, there is not real transaction left between him and the poor. He must not belittle the poor for their poverty, for virtue does not come with money and deficiency does not come with the lack of it.

THE FOURTH DUTY is that he should consider what he has given as something little because if he should make much of it he would feel proud with it. Indeed, it is said that a good deed is only complete through three things: belittling it, hurrying it, and concealing it.

THE FIFTH DUTY is that he should [when giving], select from his wealth, the most lawful and best and dearest to him. As for choosing the lawful type, it is because Allāh is good and accepts nothing but the good.<sup>1</sup>

As for choosing the best, it is because Allāh says:

وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ

“And do not aim toward the defective therefrom, spending.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 267]

In doing this, he must consider two things:

The first is the right of Allāh Exalted and Most High to be glorified: with that in mind, this is chosen for the best possible purpose. After all, if a person presents bad food to his guest, he will incite the guest’s malice against him.

The second is his own right: what he gives away now is what he shall meet tomorrow at the resurrection, so he really ought to choose the best for himself.

As for choosing the dearest to him, it is because Allāh says:

لَنْ نَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ<sup>٢</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As mentioned in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) related by Muslim #1015; and Tirmidhī #2992.

“Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of God] from that which you love”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3):9].

When Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) would notice that he loved something of his wealth dearly, he would offer it to Allāh. It has been narrated that once when he arrived at *al-Juhfa*, he was ill and said: “I desire fish.” They looked for him but only found one, which his wife then took, prepared, and presented to him. Then a poor person came to them and Ibn ‘Umar told him: “Take it.” Upon seeing this, his wife told him: ‘*Subhān Allāh!* You have tired us, and now you give away our food!’ But Ibn ‘Umar replied: ‘The servant of Allāh desires it greatly.’

It has been narrated that once a beggar came to the door of al-Rabī‘ Ibn Khuthaym<sup>2</sup> so he said: ‘Feed him sugar.’ The others said: ‘We should feed him bread; it helps him more,’ but he replied: ‘Woe unto you! Feed him sugar, for al-Rabī‘ loves sugar.’

THE SIXTH DUTY is to seek for his *ṣadaqah* people through whom it becomes pure. These are specific people from the eight categories who have the following characteristics:

- i. First he should seek the pious, for by doing so he will return their concern back to Allāh Most High.

‘Āmir Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Zubayr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*) used to choose between the people while they were in prostration. Then he would go to them with a purse of *dinars* and *dirhams* and put it by their sandals in such a way that they sensed it but not where he was. When he was asked: ‘What stops you from sending it to them?’ he replied: ‘I really dislike the thought of their faces changing color

<sup>2</sup> The al-Shāmiyyah edition says: “*Khaytham*.” Refer to *al-Mughni fi Dabṭ Asmā’ al-Rijāl* by al-Fattani

upon seeing my messenger or meeting me.’

- ii. The recipient should be one of those who have devoted themselves to supporting knowledge and spreading the religion. That equals strengthening the *Shari’ah*.
- iii. Remembering that blessings come from Allāh alone without focusing on the means except by giving thanks to others as much as the *Shari’ah* dictates: those who always recite praises when given will also blame a person when he does not give.
- vi. Concealing one’s poverty, need, and complaints: The fourth quality is [that the recipient], having concealed his poverty, need, and complaint. As Allāh Most High says:

يَحْسَبُهُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ

“An ignorant [person] would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 273]

The seeker will not catch these in his net unless he looks for them and asks the people of every locality about men with these characteristics.

THE FIFTH QUALITY is that the recipient should have a family or being restrained by illness or debt: such a person is among the restricted ones,<sup>3</sup> and being charitable towards him is a way of releasing him.

THE SIXTH QUALITY is that he should be a relative close of kin so that the gift would be both a *ṣadaqah* and maintaining the ties of kinship.

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to: al-Rāghib al-Aṣḥānī: *al-Mufradāt*, #120.

If someone has two or more of these characteristics giving to him is better. The superiority of giving to him depends on how many of these characteristics he has.

### Section Two:

## On the Etiquettes of the Recipient of *Zakāh*

Those who receive *zakāh* have to belong to one of the eight categories and have the following duties:

THE FIRST DUTY is that the recipient should understand that Allāh Most High has ordained the expenditure of *zakāh* on him so that his concerns would be removed and he could direct all of his focus towards seeking Allāh's acceptance.

THE SECOND DUTY of the recipient is that he should thank the giver, pray for him, and speak well of him. This should stay within the limits of giving proper thanks to the means. Whoever does not give thanks to people does not give thanks to Allāh as stated in the ḥadīth.<sup>4</sup>

Among the signs of complete thankfulness is by not belittling what was given, even if it was not much, and not blaming the giver. If there is some defect in it, he should conceal it. While the giver is required to think little of what he gives, the recipient should view it as something great. None of this goes against the awareness that all blessings come from Allāh Might and Sublime, for a person who does not agree that a means is a means is ignorant. What is wrong is thinking that the means is the source.

THE THIRD DUTY of the recipient is that he should examine what

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<sup>4</sup> Abū Dāwūd #4811; Tirmidhī #1955; and Ahmad, vol.2, p.258, 259, 303, 388, 461, 492, from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*) with a ṣaḥīḥ chain.

he receives; if it comes from an unlawful source he must not take it at all, for giving away someone else's property is not *ṣakāh*. If the money is doubtful he should refrain from taking it as an act of cautiousness unless he is in a difficult situation. If someone who makes most of his earnings from the unlawful pays *ṣakāh* and it is not known whom the money belongs to, the legal verdict is that it should be given away as charity. The poor can take what he needs from it if he is in a difficult situation and cannot find pure wealth.

THE FOURTH DUTY of the recipient is to guard against the pitfalls of doubt regarding the amount he receives and only take the amount he is allowed to take. He must not take more than he needs. If he is burdened by debt he should only take what he needs to settle it, and if he is a soldier he must not take more than he needs. If he receives *ṣakāh* on the basis of being needy he must refrain from money he does not need. All of this depends on his best judgment while keeping in mind that cautious fear of God lies in not taking what is doubtful.

This being said, the scholars have different views on what constitutes wealth that renders one not deserving of *ṣakāh*. The correct opinion is that it means a steady income from business, manufacture, rent, or something else. If one only get what he needs partially he takes the remaining part from the *ṣakāh*. If he does not have anything at all he takes what he needs.

He should fulfill his needs for a complete year and not exceed that. The logic behind a complete year is that when a year has passed, the time of receiving *ṣakāh* comes again. Taking money for more than a year causes hardship to the poor.

Section Three:

On the Voluntary Charity (*ṣadaqah al-taṭawwuʿ*), its  
Excellence and Etiquettes

The excellence of the voluntary charity (*ṣadaqah*) are numerous and well-known. Bukhārī relates a ḥadīth from Ibn Masʿūd (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) who narrates that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “To whom of you is the wealth of his heirs more beloved than his own wealth?” They said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger, there is none among us who does not feel that his wealth is more beloved to him.’ He then said: “Truly, his wealth is what he puts forward and the wealth of his heirs is what he postpones.”<sup>5</sup>

It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) narrates that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “If a person gives the like of a date from good earnings in charity—and only the good ascends to Allāh Most High—Allāh accepts it with His right hand. Then He raises it like one of you raises his colt, till it is like a mountain.”<sup>6</sup>

Another ḥadīth states: “*Ṣadaqah* extinguishes the Lord’s anger and protects from an evil death.”<sup>7</sup>

It occurs in a third ḥadīth: “Give charity, for *ṣadaqah* is your redemption from the fire.”<sup>8</sup>

Burayda (*radīy Allāhu ʿanḥā*) narrates that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

<sup>5</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.221; and Nasāʾī, vol.6, p.237.

<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī, vol.3, p.278; and Muslim #1014; Mālik, vol.2, p.995; Tirmidhī #661; and Nasāʾī, vol.5, p.57.

<sup>7</sup> Tirmidhī #664 from Anas with a weak chain. Ṭabarānī mentions a related ḥadīth from Umm Salamah (*radīy Allāhu ʿanḥā*) in *al-Awsaṭ* which our Shaykh al-Albānī declared ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ*, #3690.

<sup>8</sup> Abū Nuʿaym, *al-Hilyah*, vol.10, p.403, from Anas (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*). Its chain includes al-Ḥārith Ibn ʿUmayr who is weak.

“No one gives anything in *ṣadaqah* till the jaws of seventy devils are separated from it.”<sup>9</sup>

It has been narrated that a monk spent sixty years in worship in a cloister. One day, he came down and had a piece of bread with him. There, a woman exposed herself to him and he ended up fornicating with her. While he was in that state, death came to him. However before his death, a poor person came to him so he gave him the bread and shortly after he died. Then the deeds of sixty years were brought. They were put on one side of the scale and the sin was put in the other, and the sin was heavier. Then the bread was brought and put next to the deeds, and it was heavier.

It occurs in Muslim that Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “*Ṣadaqah* does not decrease wealth.”<sup>10</sup>

‘A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) narrates that once, when they slaughtered a sheep, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “What is left of it?” She said: ‘Only its shoulder blade is left,’ but the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “All of it is left except its shoulder blade.”<sup>11</sup>

With respect to the etiquette of *ṣadaqah*, they are like those of *ṣakāb*.

The scholars then differ: is it better for a poor person to take from the *ṣakāb* or *ṣadaqah*? Some of them say that *ṣakāb* is better and others hold that *ṣadaqah* is.

As for what *ṣadaqah* is the best, Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)

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<sup>9</sup> Aḥmad, vol.5, p.350; Hākim, vol.1, p.417; and Ibn Khuzaymah, al-Bazzār, and Ṭabarānī, as occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ at-Targhib*, vol.2, p.17. Its chain is ṣaḥīḥ. Refer to: *Silsilah Aḥādith as-Ṣaḥīḥah* #1268.

<sup>10</sup> Muslim #2588; Tirmidhī #2030; and Mālik, vol.2, p.1000.

<sup>11</sup> Tirmidhī #2472 with a ḥasan chain.



narrates the following: “Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) was asked which *ṣadaqah* is the best, so he replied: ‘That which you give when you are healthy and avaricious, fearing poverty and hoping for richness, and that which you do not neglect it until the soul reaches the throat and then say: ‘so-and-so gets this, and so-and-so gets that,’ when it really did belong to so-and-so.’”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.359; Muslim #1032; Nasā’ī, vol.2, p.125; and Aḥmad, vol.2, p.231, 250, 415, 447.

## THE FIFTH FOUNDATION

### On the Inner Secrets of Fasting

Know, that in the fast (*sawm*) is a special quality that is not found in anything else. And that is its close connection to Allāh<sup>1</sup>, such that He says: “Fasting is for Me, and I reward for it.”

This alone is sufficient to show the high status (*sharḥ*) of fasting. Similarly, the House (*ka'bah*) is highly dignified due to its close connection to Him, as occurs in His statement:

وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِي

“And sanctify My House.”

[*al-Hajj* (22): 26]

Indeed, the fast is only virtuous due to two significant reasons:

THE FIRST: It is a secret (*sirr*) and an inner action (*ʿaml bāṭin*) therefore, no one from the creation is able to see it. Therefore showing-off

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<sup>1</sup> In a *qudsi* ḥadīth related by Bukhārī, vol.4, p.88; Muslim #1151, 161; Mālik, vol.1, p.310; Tirmidhī #764; Nasāʾī, vol.4, p.162-165; and al-Baghawī #1710.

(*riyā'*) cannot enter into it.

THE SECOND: It subdues (*qabr*) the enemy of Allāh, for one's desires (*shahawāt*) are the means (*wasila*) he resorts to, and they only become strong through eating and drinking. As long as the ground of desires is fertile, the devils keep coming to the pasture, but once desires are abandoned their pathways become narrow.

There are many narrations about fasting which indicates its excellence, and they are well-known.

### Section One: The Recommended Practices connected with Fasting

It is recommended to eat the pre-dawn meal (*subhūr*)<sup>2</sup> and delaying (*ta'khīr*) in taking it are preferable, as well as hastening to break (*ta'jīl al-faṭr*)<sup>3</sup> the fast and doing so with dates (*tamr*).

It is recommended to practice generosity during Ramaḍān, as well as doing good deeds and increasing in charity (*sadaqah*). This is in accordance with the way of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).<sup>4</sup>

One is also encouraged to study the Qur'ān and perform *i'tikāf* (the retreat) during Ramaḍān, especially in the last ten nights. During these nights, he should strive more than usual. It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) said: "When the ten<sup>5</sup> would

<sup>2</sup> The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Take the pre-dawn meal, for indeed there is blessing in it." Bukhārī and Muslim

<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "My nation will continue to be in a good state as long as they hasten to break the fast and delay the pre-dawn meal." *Musnad Aḥmad*

<sup>4</sup> The ḥadīths that indicate this are abundant, sound, and famous.

<sup>5</sup> Meaning the last ten nights of Ramaḍān.

come, the Prophet would tighten his waist-wrapper (*iḡār*), spend the night in worship, and wake his family up (for prayer).”<sup>6</sup>

The scholars have mentioned two views concerning the meaning of “tighten his waist-wrapper (*iḡār*)”:

The first: It means the turning away (*i’rād*) from women.

The second: It is an expression denoting his (緊) eagerness (*jad*) and diligence (*tashmīr*) in doing good deeds.

The Scholars also say that the reason for his (緊) exertion in the last ten days of Ramadān was due to his (緊) seeking of the Night of Power (*layl al-qadr*).

#### Section Two:

### An Exposition of the Inner Secrets of Fasting and its Characteristics

There are three levels (*māratib*) of fasting: The general fast (*ṣawm al-‘amūm*), the fast of the select few (*ṣawm al-khuṣūṣ*) and the fast of the elite among the select few (*ṣawm khuṣūṣ al-khuṣūṣ*).

As for the general fast (*ṣawm al-‘amūm*), then it involves refraining (*kaff*) from satisfying the appetite of the stomach (*baṭn*) and the appetite of the private parts (*farj*)

The fast of the select few (*ṣawm al-khuṣūṣ*), then it is refraining of ones gaze (*kaff al-naẓr*), tongue (*lisān*), hands (*yad*), feet (*rijl*), hearing (*sam*) and eyes (*baṣr*), as well as the rest of his body parts (*jawāriḥ*)

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<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī, vol.4, p.233; Muslim #1174; Abū Dāwūd #1376; Tirmidhī #796; and Nasā’ī, vol.3, p.218.

from committing sinful acts.

As for the fast of the elite among the select few (*ṣawm khusūṣ al-khusūṣ*) is the fasting of the heart (*ṣawm al-qalb*) from worldly aims (*himam*) and thoughts (*afqār*) which distance one away from Allāh, as well as its (the heart's) refraining from all the things that Allāh has placed on the same level. The explanations of this fasting will be mentioned elsewhere ahead.<sup>7</sup>

Among the characteristics of the specific fast is lowering the gaze (*qadd al-baṣr*), safeguards his tongue (*ḥifẓ al-lisān*) from the repulsive speech that is forbidden, disliked, or which has no benefit, as well as controlling the rest of his body parts.

Bukhārī narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Whoever does not abstain from false speech and acting in accordance with it, then [know] that Allāh is in no need of him abandoning his food and drink."<sup>8</sup>

Another characteristic [of the specific fast] is that one does not overfill himself with food during the night. Instead, he eats in due measure, for indeed, the son of Ādam does not fill a vessel more evil than his stomach.<sup>9</sup>

If he were to eat his fill during the first part of the night, he would not make good use of himself for the remainder of the night. Similarly, if he eats to his fill for *subḥūr*, he will not benefit till the approach of noon. This is because excessive eating causes laziness (*kasl*) and

<sup>7</sup> This, too, should really be included in the fast of the normal man!

<sup>8</sup> Bukhārī, vol.4, p.99; Abū Dāwūd #2362; and Tirmidhī #707.

<sup>9</sup> As occurs in a ḥadīth related by Tirmidhī #2381; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.121; Ibn Mājah #3349; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.132; and Baghawi #4047.

lethargy (*fatūr*). Therefore, the objective of fasting disappears due to one's excessiveness in eating, for what is intended by the fast, is that one savors the taste of hunger (*jū'*) and becomes an abandoner of desires.

Section Three:

Voluntary Fasts (*ṣawm al-taṭawwu'*)

As for the voluntary fasts (*ṣawm al-taṭawwu'*), then know that preference for fasting is established in certain virtuous days (*ayyām al-fāḍila*). Some of these days occur annually, such as fasting the first six days of the month of Shawwāl after Ramaḍān, fasting the day of 'Arafah, the day of 'Āshūrāh, and the ten days of Dhū'l-Ḥijjah and Muḥarram.

Some of them occur monthly, such as the first part of the month, the middle part of it, and the last part of it. So whoever fasts the first part of the month, the middle part of it, and the last part of it, then he has done well, but it is better to fast these three in the days of the white nights (*ayyām al-bīd*).<sup>10</sup>

Some fasts occur every week, and they are every Monday and Thursday.

The most virtuous of the voluntary fasts (*ṣawm al-taṭawwu'*) is the fast of [Prophet] Dāwūd (*'alayhis-salām*). He would fast one day and break his fast the next day.<sup>11</sup>

This combines the following three objectives:

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<sup>10</sup> The three days in the middle of the lunar month, which are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth.

<sup>11</sup> In *Ṣiyām al-Taṭawwu'* the author compiles the rest of the types and checks the authenticity of the related ḥadīths. It was printed by Dar al-Salafiyya in Kuwait.

1. The soul (*nafs*) is given its share on the day the fast is broken and on the day of fasting, it completes its worship in full. This combines its right and duty, and that is the just way.
2. The days of eating are days of thankfulness (*shukr*) and the days of fasting are days of patience (*sabr*), and faith (*imān*) consists of two halves: thankfulness and patience.
3. It is the most difficult struggle (*mujāhada*) for the soul. This is because every time the soul gets accustomed to a certain condition, it transfers itself to that.

As for fasting every day (*ṣawm al-dahr*), then it has been reported by Muslim, from the ḥadīth of Abū Qatādah, that ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) asked the Prophet (ﷺ): ‘What is the case if one were to fast every day?’ So he (ﷺ) said: “He did not fast [every day] nor did he break his fast [every day] —or—he did not fast [every day] and he did not break his fast [every day].”<sup>11</sup>

This should be understood to refer to someone who fasts continuously without a break, even on the days when fasting is forbidden, so if one breaks his fast for the Two ‘Ids and fasting the days of *Tashriq*,<sup>12</sup> there is nothing wrong with that.

It is narrated from Hisham Ibn ‘Urwa that his father would fast continuously. ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anha*), too, used to do this.

Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “After Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), Abū Talḥah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) fasted continuously for forty years.”

Know that the one who has been given intelligence (*fiṭna*), knows the objective (*maqṣūd*) behind fasting. Therefore, he burdens himself

<sup>11</sup> Muslim #1162; Abū Dāwūd #2425; and Nasā’ī, vol.4, p.207.

<sup>12</sup> The second, the third and fourth day of *‘Id ul-Adha*.

to the extent that he will not be unable to do that which is more beneficial than it.

Indeed, Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) would fast very little and it is reported that he used to say: “When I fast, I grow weak in my prayer. And I prefer the prayer over the (optional) fast.”

Some of them (the Companions) would weaken in their recitation of the Qur'ān while fasting. Thus, they would exceed in breaking their fast (i.e. by observing less optional fasts), until they were able to balance their recitation.

Every individual is knowledgeable of his condition and of what will rectify it.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> This is a profound lesson for students of Islām and callers to Allāh!



## THE SIXTH FOUNDATION

# On the Inner Secrets of Pilgrimage

### Section One:

## On the Etiquettes of the Pilgrim

If one desires to perform the pilgrimage, he [the pilgrim] ought to begin with repentance (*tauba*), fix any grievances he may be guilty of, payment of debts, arrangements for provisions for those for whom he must provide until his return, returning of the trusts [entrusted] to him.

He should take with him enough lawful (*halāl*) money for going and returning without meagerness in such a way that he is able to have abundant provisions and generous (*rifq*) toward the destitute.

[The Pilgrim] should take with him what he needs to fix himself, like a *ṣiwāk*, comb, mirror, and kohl-jar.

Furthermore he should, before setting out, give away something as charity, as well as hire for himself a [riding] beast; he must show the hirer what he intends to load on it, no matter how little or great.

A man once told Ibn al-Mubārak: ‘Carry this letter to so-and-so for me,’ but he said: ‘Not until I seek consent from the hirer.’

[The Pilgrim] should find a companion (*rafiq*) who is pious (*sālīh*), who loves goodness and helps him in it, [so that] if he forgets [something], the companion will remind him; and if he remembers [something], the companion will help him [accomplish it]; and if he fears [something], the companion will encourage him; and if he becomes weak, the companion will strengthen him.

A group should appoint the most well-mannered and gentle<sup>1</sup> of them to lead them. A leader is needed because people will have differing views and that calls for organization. The leader must treat others gently, do what is in their best interest, and be their protector (*wiqāya*).

When one travels, he should utter good words, feed others, and manifest beautiful character (*muḥāssin al-akhlāq*), for travelling brings out the inner side of a person. If one maintains good character (*ḥusn al-khuluq*) while travelling—which is where a person easily becomes annoyed—he will be even more well-mannered when not travelling.

Indeed, it is said that if a man is praised by both those who have dealt with him at home and those who have accompanied him while travelling, do not doubt his piety.

He should bid farewell to his companions and brothers who are not travelling and ask them to pray for him. He should set out on a Thursday morning and offer two units of prayer at home before leaving. He then bids farewell to his family and property and recites the narrated invocations (*adʿiyya*) and remembrance (*adhkār*) when he

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<sup>1</sup> He should also have knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah!

exist the house and upon mounting and alighting. These invocations are well-known and can be found in many books<sup>2</sup> that talk about the rituals of pilgrimage (*manasik al-hajj*). The same applies to all the rituals like entering the state of ritual consecration (*iḥrām*), the circumambulation (*tawāf*), the running (*sa'y*) [i.e. running between *al-Safa* and *al-Marwa*], and standing (*wuqūf*) at 'Arafah; one should recite the prescribed words of remembrance (*adhkār*) and invocations (*da'wāt*) and observe the etiquette (*adab*) of those rituals. All of that can be read about in the books of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) where it has been dealt with exhaustively.

## Section Two:

### The Subtle Etiquettes and Secrets of Pilgrimage

Know that one cannot reach (*wuṣūl*) Allāh themselves in the mountains to seek intimacy (*uns*) with Allāh, and the pilgrimage (*hajj*) was made the monkhood (*raḥbānīya*) of this nation.

Its etiquette previously mentioned includes abstaining from trade that occupies one's heart (*qalb*) and distracts him from his main concern (*ḥamm*). This helps him stay focused on obedience (*tā'at*) to Allāh Most High. The pilgrim should have a shabby appearance of shaggy hair and dusty body. He should not be much concerned with outer beauty (*ẓīnab*).

He should avoid mounting the camel-born litter unless he has an excuse (*udhar*) like having difficulty to stay on the camel's back, for the Prophet (ﷺ) performed the pilgrimage on a camel with an old saddle under him.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the book *Mubadhab 'Amal al-Yawm wa al-Layla li Ibn al-Sunni*.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Mājah #2890. Its chain includes al-Rabī' Ibn Ṣaḥīḥ who is truthful but has a bad memory. The erudite scholar al-Albānī, however, declared it sound in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* #1313.

Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh manifests His pride about the pilgrim to the angels and says: ‘Look at my servants! They have come to Me shaggy and dusty from every deep mountain pass. Bear witness that I have forgiven them!’”<sup>4</sup>

Allāh has honoured and glorified His House, made it a point of destination for His servants, and He sanctified its vicinity to magnify and glorify its status, and made the mountain of ‘Arafah like the landmark popping on His House.

Know that each act of the pilgrimage contains a reminder for those who remember and a lesson for those who consider.

When one acquires the provisions for the trip, he should remember the provisions of the Afterlife which are his deeds. He must beware of ruining them with ostentation (*riyā’*) and seeking of fame (*sam’a*) and not let them accompany him. They are of no benefit to him like wet food that becomes spoiled in the first stages of the trip and leaves a person confused when the time of need comes. When he departs his country and enters the desert and faces the challenges of travel, let him remember how he will leave this world through death (*mawt*) and arrive at the rendezvous of the resurrection (*miqāt al-qiyyamah*), and let him remember the horrors in between.

When he enters the state of ritual consecration (*iḥram*), takes off his clothes, and wears the garments of a pilgrim, he should remember his burial shroud and that he will meet his lord with an appearance different from that of the people of this world. When he says: “*Here I am! At your service!*” he should see himself answering the call of Allāh Most High:

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<sup>4</sup> Ibn Hibbān related this from Jābir and Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*). Aḥmad and Tabarānī related it from Ibn ‘Amr. It is sound. Refer to *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’* #1863, 1864, and *Sharḥ al-Iḥyā’*, vol.4, p.438.

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ

“And proclaim to the people the *hajj*.”

[*al-Hajj* (22): 27]

Let him hope for acceptance (*qabūl*) and fear that he will get no answer (*ijaba*).

When he arrives at the *Haram*, he should hope for safety from His punishment and fear that he might not be from those who earn His proximity. His hope (*rajā*), however, should be greater, for generosity prevails, the visitor’s right is protected, and the security of those who seek it will not go to waste.

When he sees the Sacred House (*al-Masjid al-Haram*), he should try to feel its magnificence in his heart and give thanks (*shukr*) to Allāh for making him reach the level of those who travel to it. Let him feel the greatness of the circumambulation (*tawāḥḥ*) when performing it, for it is prayer, and let him have conviction that he is giving a pledge of obedience<sup>5</sup> to Allāh when touching the Black Stone. He should do that with firm resolution to stay loyal to that pledge. When he clings to the clothing of the Ka’bah and stick to the Multazam, he should envision how a sinner takes refuge in his master and the proximity of the lovers. One of them recited:

The clothing of Your house entails security from You  
I have clung to it in a quest for protection, O Creator  
I think not, once I have brought myself to cling to it  
Fearing Hell, that You will place me near the fire  
Here I am, in the vicinity of the House, and you told us  
“Travel to it,” commanding the visitor’s protection

When he paces between *al-Ṣafā* and *al-Marwa*, he should liken it to the scales of the balance (*mīzān*) as if he were going back and forth

<sup>5</sup> And this is the default state of the Muslims that is not restricted to a specific time!

between them in the roads of the resurrection (*'araṣāt al-qiyāmah*), or as if he were a slave who keeps coming to the king's gates in manifestation of his pure (*khulūs*) servitude, hope of being viewed with mercy (*rahma*), and desire (*tama'*) of having his needs fulfilled.

When standing on the mountain of 'Arafah and seeing the crowds and hearing their raised voices and different languages, the pilgrim should envision the resurrection and how all the different nations come together in that place to seek intercession.”

When you cast the pebbles, intend submission (*inqiyād*) to His command, the manifestation of slavery (*riqq*) and servitude (*'ubūdiyya*), and pure abidance by orders with no personal gain.

When you go to Medīnah and it comes in sight, remember that it is the city that Allāh chose for His Prophet (ﷺ), and where He told him (ﷺ) to migrate, and where He put his (ﷺ) home. Imagine seeing the footsteps of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) when he walked in it and envision his submission (*khushū'*) and tranquility (*sakīna*). When you visit his grave (*qabr*)<sup>6</sup>, make sure that your heart is present to glorify (*ta'ẓīm*) and revere (*hayba*) him. Imagine his noble appearance (*sūra al-karīma*) in your mind and acknowledge his mighty status (*'aẓīm martaba*) in your heart. Then send him your greetings of peace and know that he is aware of your attendance and greetings, as occurs in a ḥadīth.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Without having travelled from abroad exclusively for the purpose of visiting it. Refer to Ibn 'Abdu'l-Hādī: *al-'Uqūd al-Durriyya*, pp. 330-360.

<sup>7</sup> Ghazālī relates the following ḥadīth in *al-Iḥyā'*, vol.1, p.271, to support his words: “He is aware of your attendance and greetings”: “Allāh has appointed an angel to be by his grave and convey to him the greetings of the members of his nation.”

Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-'Irāqī says in his checking: “It was related by Nasā'ī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Ḥākim from the ḥadīth of Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) which says: ‘Allāh has angels that roam the land and convey the greetings of my nation to me.’” I say: its chain is sound as occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* #2170, but it does not support those who use it to prove the author's statement in any way, so contemplate.

THE SEVENTH FOUNDATION

## On the Etiquettes and Excellence of the Qur'ān

### Section One:

#### On the Excellence of the Qur'ān

The greatest excellence (*a'ẓam fadhā'il*) of the Qur'ān is its being the speech (*kalām*) of Allāh Mighty and Sublime. Allāh praises it in numerous verses, such as:

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ

“And this is a Book which We have sent down, blessed ”

[*al-An'ām* (6):92],

and

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ

“Indeed, this Qur'ān guides to that which is most suitable.”

[*al-Isrā'* (17):9],

and

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ

“Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it.”

[*al-Fuṣṣilat* (41):42]

It occurs in the collection of Bukhārī that ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The best of you is he who learns the Qur’ān and teaches it.”<sup>1</sup>

Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Indeed, Allāh has people from mankind.” It was said: “Who are they, O Messenger of Allāh?” so he replied: “The people of the Qur’ān; they are Allāh’s special folk.”<sup>2</sup>

In another ḥadīth the Prophet (ﷺ) says: “Allāh does not punish a heart that contains the Qur’ān.”<sup>3</sup>

Ibn ‘Amr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)<sup>4</sup> narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The person of Qur’ān is told: ‘Read, ascend, and recite distinctly as you used to do in the world, for your station is by the last verse you read.’”<sup>5</sup>

Burayda (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The Qur’ān meets its companion on the Day of Resurrection when his grave breaks open in a form of a man with an altered complexion

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<sup>1</sup> Bukhārī, vol.9, p.66; Tirmidhī #2909; and Abū Dāwūd #1452

<sup>2</sup> Nasā’ī: *al-Kubrā*, as occurs in *Tuhfat al-Ashraf*, vol.1, p.98; Ibn Mājah #215; and Aḥmad, vol.3, p.127, from Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with a ṣaḥīḥ chain.

<sup>3</sup> Related by al-Suyūṭī in *al-Jāmi’ al-Kabir* #27013. He said: “Al-Daylāmī narrated it from ‘Uqbah Ibn ‘Āmir.” I say: the comments of the Shāmīyyah edition read: “It is not authentic!”

<sup>4</sup> In the Shāmīyyah edition erroneously: “From Ibn ‘Umar.”

<sup>5</sup> Tirmidhī #2915 who declared it sound; Abū Dāwūd #1464; and Aḥmad, vol.2, p.192 with a ḥasan chain.



and says: 'Do you know me?' Its companion will say: 'I do not know you.' Then it says: 'I am your companion the Qur'ān who quenched your thirst in the midday heat and made you stay up at night. Every merchant stands behind his trade, and today I stand behind every trade for you.' Then he is given dominion on his right hand and everlasting abode on his left. A crown of reverence is placed on his head and his father is dressed in two garments that the entire world could not afford. They will ask: 'For what are we dressed in this?' and it is said: 'Your son took the Qur'ān.' It is then said: 'Read and ascend in the stations and rooms of Paradise!' He will keep ascending as long as he reads, whether swiftly or leisurely."<sup>6</sup>

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'A memorizer of the Qur'ān should be known by his night when others sleep, by his day when people do not fast, by his sorrow when people rejoice, by his crying when people laugh, by his silence when people get involved, and by his submission when people behave haughtily.

It does not befit him to be harsh (*jāfi*), heedless (*ghāfil*), clamorous (*sakkāb*), nor fierce (*ḥadīd*).'

Al-Fuḍayl said: 'He who bears the Qur'ān bears the flag of Islām. He should not talk nonsense with those who talk nonsense, be unmindful with the unmindful, nor play with those who play, in magnification of Allāh Most High.'

He should not be in need of anyone, but rather everyone should be in need of him.

Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal said: 'I saw the Lord of Might in a dream. I said: 'My Lord! What is it that brings those who seek Your proximity closest to You?' He said: 'Through My speech, O Aḥmad.' I then

<sup>6</sup> Aḥmad, vol.5, p.348; Dārimi, vol.2, p.450. It includes Bishr Ibn al-Muhājir who is weak.

said: 'My Lord! With understanding or without understanding?' and He said: 'With and without understanding.'<sup>7</sup>

## Section Two: The Etiquette of Recitation

The reciter (*qari'*) of the Qur'ān should be in a state of ritual purity (*wuḍū'*) and observe proper conduct (*adab*). He should read with his head down, not sitting cross-legged, reclining, or in a posture of the arrogant (*mutakabbir*).<sup>8</sup>

The best conduct would be to read while standing in prayer in the *masjid*.

With respect to how much one should read, the habits of the predecessors varied. Some of them completed the entire Qur'ān once every day, some more than once<sup>9</sup>, and others completed it in three days. Some completed it once every week and others once every month as they were busy with contemplation, spreading knowledge or teaching it, worship other than reciting, or some worldly affair.

The best way of reciting the Qur'ān is that which does not hinder one from his important tasks, does not cause him physical harm, and does not hinder him from distinctive recitation and contemplation.

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'I would rather read *al-Baqarah*

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<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Jawzi: *Manāqib al-Imām Aḥmad*, p.434 with a chain that includes unknown men. Thus, neither the chain nor the text of this narration can be attributed to Aḥmad!

<sup>8</sup> Imām al-Nawawī's *al-Tibyan fī ādāb Ḥamalāt al-Qur'ān*, which I have worked on, is beneficial on this topic.

<sup>9</sup> The Prophetic guidance regarding this is that one should not complete it in less than three days nor stay away from it for more than forty.

and *Āl-ʿImrān* leisurely with contemplation than read the entire Qurʾān swiftly through.’

However, if there are days when one has a lot of time, he should take the opportunity to read a lot of Qurʾān so as to earn a lot of reward. Indeed, ʿUthmān would read the entire Qurʾān in a single prayer unit of *witr* and al-Shāfiʿī completed the Qurʾān sixty times in Ramaḍān.

But as far as routine goes, one should do what he can as preceded.

Some of them recommended completing the recital in the two units of the Morning Prayer (*al-fajr*) or after them for those who finish the Qurʾān in the daytime, and in the two units of the Sunset Prayer (*al-maghrib*) or after them for those who finish it in the nighttime. They preferred this so that one could face the new day or new night with the completion of the Qurʾān.

Ibn Masʿūd (*raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhu*) said: ‘For him who completes (*khatm*) the Qurʾān there is an invocation that is answered.’

When Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhu*) would complete the Qurʾān, he would assemble his family and invoke Allāh.

Section Three:

Beautifying the Voice [with Qur'ān]

It is recommended to recite in a beautiful voice (*taḥsīn al-qirā'a*). If one does not have a fine voice (*ḥasan al-sawt*), he should beautify it as much as he can. As for reading with modulated sounds, the predecessors used to hate it.

One is encouraged to read by himself, for a ḥadīth says: “The superiority of reading in private (*sirr*) over reading out loud is like the superiority of secret charity over public charity.”<sup>10</sup>

He should, however, be able to hear his own voice.

This being said, there is nothing wrong with raising one's voice sometimes if there is a good reason for that, such as when a loud voice makes it easier for one to memorize, or when one needs to repel laziness or sleep or to wake up the dozing.

With respect to the ruling of reciting in the prayer, the amount one should read in his obligatory prayers, and the places of loud and silent recital, all of that is well-known and found in the books of jurisprudence.

If one owns a copy of the Qur'ān (*muṣḥaf*), he should read some verses from it on a daily basis so as to keep it from being abandoned.

The reciter of the Qur'ān should contemplate the kindness that

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<sup>10</sup> Al-Zabidi says in *Sharḥ al-Iḥyā'*, vol.4, p.493: “It has not been narrated with this wording.” I say: the following ḥadīth suffices: “One who recites the Qur'ān openly is like one who gives charity openly, and one who recites the Qur'ān in private is like one who gives charity in private.” This was related by Abū Dāwūd #1333; Tirmidhī #2920; and Nasa'ī, vol.5, p.80 from 'Uqba Ibn 'Amir with a ḥasan chain.

Allāh Most High has had with His creation by letting the meanings of His speech reach their perceptions. He must know that what he is reading is not the speech of men and should envision the greatness of the speaker. Let him contemplate His words, for contemplation is the main purpose of reading the Qur’ān. If that cannot be achieved except by repeating a verse, let him repeat it.

Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) once stood a whole night repeating the verse<sup>11</sup>:

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَلَهُمْ عِبَادُكَ

“If You should punish them—indeed they are Your servants.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5):118]

It has also been narrated that Tamīm al-Dāri (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) once stood in prayer with the verse:

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ  
ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

“Or do those who commit evils think We will make them like those who have believed and done righteous deeds?”

[*al-Jāthiyah* (45):21]

The same has been said about al-Rabī‘ Ibn Khutaym.<sup>12</sup>

The reciter should seek to perceive the befitting meaning of every verse and understand it, so when he recites:

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ

“Who created the heavens and the earth.”

[*al-An‘ām* (6):1],

<sup>11</sup> Nasā’ī, vol.1, p.177; Ibn Mājah #1350. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Irāqī declared its chain as ṣaḥīḥ in *Takhrīj al-Iḥyā’*, vol.1, p.282.

<sup>12</sup> In the Shāmīyah edition: “Khaytham,” which is an error.

He should realize His greatness and envision His power over everything he sees. When he recites:

أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا تَدْعُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

“Have you seen that which you emit?”

[*al-Wāqī'ah* (56):58]

Let him think about the drop of seamen which, in spite of consisting of parts similar to each other, is divided into flesh and bones, veins and nerves, and different shapes like the head, hands, and legs. Let him then think about the noble attributes that manifest themselves in these things like hearing, sight, and intellect. Let him contemplate these marvelous things!

When he recites verses about the states of the rejecters, he should make himself fear the violent seizure that may await him should he become heedless of the command.

The reciter should avoid everything that hinders him from understanding. The Satan might, for example, lead him to think that he mispronounced a letter and failed to utter it from the correct articulation point so he recites it again. In this way, the Satan manages to distract him from focusing on the meaning.<sup>13</sup>

Other things that prevent the reciter from understanding what he recites are persistence in sinfulness, pride, and following whims. These darken the heart and lay rust on it, so they are like rust on a mirror that prevents the truth from being seen clearly. The heart is like a mirror, sins are like rust, and the meanings of the Qur'ān are like the images that are seen in the mirror. Training the heart by removing desires is like polishing the mirror.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī has discussed this in detail in *Talbis Iblis*.

The reciter of the Qur'ān should know that the speech and the warnings it contains are directed to him and the stories are not meant to be entertainment but lessons. Let him remember that and recite like a slave to whom his master has granted a written promise of freedom if certain terms are fulfilled. Let him contemplate the Book and act upon its requirements, for a sinner who reads the Qur'ān repeatedly is like one who repeats the king's letter and turns away from cultivating his kingdom and abiding by his orders in the letter. He studies the letter insufficiently and then goes against its orders, and indeed, his actions would imply less ridicule and be less deserving of the king's anger if he would leave the study all together and then go against his orders.

He should not see himself as having any ability or power and should not view himself with pleasure as if he were very pious. Those who see themselves as falling short attain Allāh's proximity.

## THE EIGHTH FOUNDATION

# On the Invocations and Supplications

### Section One:

## On the Excellence of Remembrance

Know that after reading (*tilāwa*) of the Qur’ān there is no other worship (*‘ibāda*) performed with the tongue as virtuous (*afḍal*) as remembering Allāh Most High and raising one’s needs to Him through pure invocations (*ad’iyya al-khālīṣa*). The excellence of remembrance (*dhikr*) is testified to by the Word of Allāh:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ

“Remember Me, and I will remember you.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2):152]

And His saying:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ

“...those who remember Allāh, standing, sitting or lying down on their sides.”

[*Al-‘Imrān* (3):191]



and

وَالَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا

“The men who remember Allāh often.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33):35]

It has been narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh says: ‘I am with My servant as long as he remembers me and his lips keep moving in my remembrance.’”<sup>1</sup>

It occurs in the collection of Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “No people sit down to remember Allāh but the angels encompass them, mercy covers them, tranquility descends upon them, and Allāh mentions them to those who are with Him.”<sup>2</sup>

There are numerous traditions about this, all mentioned under the topic of virtuous deeds.

Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “No people sit in a gathering and then disperse without remembering Allāh but it is as if they have departed a carcass of a donkey. They will regret that gathering on the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>3</sup>

Another ḥadīth states: “No people sit in a gathering without remembering Allāh and sending prayers upon the Prophet but they will regret that on the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bukhārī narrates it in suspended form in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol.13, p.499. Aḥmad, vol.2, p.540 and Bukhārī (*Khalq Af‘al al-‘Ibād*, #87) connected it from Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with a ṣaḥīḥ chain. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Irāqī (*Takbrij al-Iḥyā’*, 1/294) attributed the narration from him to Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Bayhaqī and the same from Abū’l-Dardā’ (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) to Ḥākim.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim #2700; Tirmidhī #3375 from Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and Abū Sa‘īd (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

<sup>3</sup> Abū Dāwūd #4855 with a ḥasan chain.

<sup>4</sup> Aḥmad, vol.2, p.463; Ḥākim, vol.1, p.492 from Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Al-Haythamī related it in *al-Majma’*, vol.10, p.79, and said: “Its men are those of *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*.” I say: its chain is ṣaḥīḥ.

With respect to the excellence of supplication (*du‘ā*), Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There is nothing more noble before Allāh than supplication,”<sup>5</sup>

And: “The noblest worship is supplication,”<sup>6</sup>

And: “Whoever does not ask Allāh, He will become angry at him.”<sup>7</sup>

Another ḥadīth states: “Ask Allāh from His grace, for Allāh loves to be asked.”<sup>8</sup>

## Section Two: On the Etiquettes of Supplication

The etiquette of supplication includes that one seeks the noble times (*al-awqāt al-sharīfah*) for his supplications like the day of ‘Arafah from the year, Ramaḍān from the months of the year, Friday from the days of the week, and pre-dawn from the parts of the night.

The noble times also include the period between the adhān and the iqāmah, the time right after the five daily prayers (*ṣalawāt*), during rain, in battle in the path of Allāh, upon completing (*khatm*) the Qur’ān, when breaking (*iftār*) the fast, and when the heart is present (*ḥudūr al-qalb*) and fearful (*wajil*).

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<sup>5</sup> Tirmidhī #3367; Ibn Mājah #3829; Ibn Hibbān #2397; Ḥākim, vol.1, p.490; and al-Baghawī #1388 with a ḥasan chain.

<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī: *al-Adab al-Mufrad* #713 from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). It contains the indecisive-transmission (*an‘ana*) of al-Ḥasan.

<sup>7</sup> Aḥmad, vol.2, p.442; Tirmidhī #3370; Ibn Mājah #3827 from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Its chain includes Abu Ṣāliḥ al-Khawzi whom some declared weak and others reliable. It has a corroborative narration from Ibn Mas‘ūd and another from ‘A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), which makes it fair.

<sup>8</sup> Tirmidhī #3566 from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Its chain includes Ḥammad Ibn Waqid who is weak. Refer to *Silsilah Aḥādīth al-Da‘īfah* #492.

The truth is that the nobility (*sharf*) of these times goes back to the nobility of one's state. Pre-dawn, for example, is a time when the heart is clear (*safā' al-qalb*) and unoccupied (*farāḡ*) and the state of prostration (*ḥālat al-sujūd*) is a state of humility (*ḥālat al-dhull*).

The etiquette of supplication also includes that one faces the *qibla*, raises his hands, and then wipes his face with them.<sup>9</sup> He should also lower his voice. The supplication should begin with the mention of Allāh Mighty and Sublime and that should be followed by sending prayers (*salawāt*) upon the Prophet (ﷺ). One should not try to make his supplication a rhymed prose (*saj'*).

The etiquette also includes—and this is the inner conduct (*adab al-bāṭin*) that plays a fundamental role in receiving an answer (*ijāba*)—repentance (*tauba*) and fixing the wrongs one has done to others.

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<sup>9</sup> This has no authentic evidence going back to the Prophet (ﷺ). For further detail, refer to *Irwā' al-Ghālil* #433, 434 and *Takhrīj al-Iḥyā'*, vol.1, p.305.

## THE NINTH FOUNDATION

# On the Arrangements of Litanies for Different Parts of the Day and Night

### Section One:

## Set Acts of Worship for Different Parts of the Day and their Virtue

Know that when one knows Allāh, believes in His promise, and realizes how short life is, it is binding that he leaves all negligence in this short lifespan of his. Since focusing on a single type of worship makes the soul (*nafs*) weary, one should be gentle (*talattuf*) with it and move it from one act to another. Allāh says:

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٢٥﴾  
وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ، وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا ﴿٢٦﴾

“And mention the name of your Lord [in prayer] morning and evening. And during the night prostrate to Him and exalt [i.e., praise] Him a long [part of the] night.”

[*al-Insān* (76):25-26]

This and other verses on the subject indicate that the correct path to Allāh Most High is taken by observing different times and filling them with litanies (*awrād*) of worship on a constant basis. Allāh says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ  
وَالنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِّمَنۢ أَرَادَ أَنۢ يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

“And it is He who has made the night and the day in succession for whoever desires to remember or desires gratitude.”

[*al-Furqān* (25):62]

“*In succession*” here means that each follows the other so that one can make up during one of them what he missed during the other.

## Section Two:

### Exposition on the Number of Litanies of the Day and the Night and their Order

The litanies (*awrād*) of the day are seven and the litanies (*awrād*) of the night are six. Let us now mention the significance (*faḍila*) and purpose of each litany (*wird*)<sup>1</sup> and what pertains to it.

*The first wird of the day:* The time between the true dawn (*fajr*) and sunrise. This is a noble time (*waqt sharīf*), by which Allāh Most High, has made an oath by it:

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا نَفَسَ ﴿١٨﴾

“And by the dawn when it breathes [i.e. stirs].”

[*al-Takwīr* (81):18]

When the student of the path (*murīd*) wakes up, he should remember Allāh and say:

<sup>1</sup> A *wird* pl. *awrād* is often translated as ‘litany pl. litanies’ namely, a litany of supplications and phrases of remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allāh that one says each day. But *wird* may also be kind of supererogatory worship that is repeated regularly, such as non-obligatory ritual prayers, recitations of the Qur’ān and the like.

«الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ»

“Praise be to Allāh, Who has revived us after giving us death, and to Whom we shall be resurrected.”<sup>1</sup>

It occurs in the collection of Muslim that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) says: ‘When night came, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) would say:

أَمْسَيْنَا وَأَمْسَى الْمُلْكُ لِلَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ. لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، رَبِّ أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ مَا فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ وَخَيْرَ مَا بَعْدَهَا، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ وَشَرِّ مَا بَعْدَهَا، رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْكَسَلِ وَسُوءِ الْكِبَرِ، رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَعَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ.

“We have entered upon the evening, as have the sovereignty of Allāh. Praise be to Allāh. There is no god but Allāh, Who is alone; He has no associate; to Him belongs sovereignty and to Him belongs praise; He is powerful over everything. My Lord, I ask you the best of this night and the best of what follows it, and I take refuge in You from the evil of this night and the evil of what follows it. My Lord, I take refuge in You from laziness and the evil of arrogance. My Lord, I take refuge in You from punishment in the fire and punishment in the grave.”<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, he should say in the morning:

أَصْبَحْنَا وَأَصْبَحَ الْمُلْكُ لِلَّهِ

“We have entered upon the morning, as have the sovereignty of Allāh...”<sup>3</sup>

He should also say thrice:

<sup>1</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.96; Tirmidhī #3413; Abū Dāwūd #5049 from Hudhayfa (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Muslim, however, relates it from al-Barā’ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) #2711.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim #2723; Tirmidhī #3387; and Abū Dāwūd #5071.

<sup>3</sup> These supplications are sound and well-known and can be found in the books of the Prophetic words of remembrance.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ  
وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ.

“In the Name of Allāh, against Whose name nothing on the earth or in the heaven can do harm. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.”

He should also say:

رَضِيتُ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا، وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ نَبِيًّا وَرَسُولًا

“I am content with Allāh as my Lord, Islām as my religion, and Muḥammad as my Prophet and Messenger.”

When he performs the Morning Prayer (*fajr*), he says ten times with his legs folded<sup>4</sup> before speaking:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ،  
يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

“There is no god but Allāh, Who is alone; He has no associate; to Him belongs sovereignty and to Him belongs praise; He is powerful over everything.”

He should then recite the Master Supplication for Repentance (*sayyid al-istighfār*):

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ، وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ  
وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ، أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ  
عَلَيَّ وَأَبُوءُ لَكَ بِذُنُوبِي، فَاعْفِرْ لِي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

“O Allāh, You are my Lord. There is no god but You. You created me. I am your servant. I will observe my covenant and promise to You as much as I can. I take refuge with You

<sup>4</sup> There is no sound basis for this particular posture.

from the evil I have committed. I acknowledge to You Your favour upon me, and I acknowledge my sin. So forgive me, for verily no one forgives sins but You.”

He should also say:

أَصْبَحْنَا عَلَى فِطْرَةِ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَعَلَى كَلِمَةِ الْإِخْلَاصِ، وَعَلَى دِينِ  
نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَعَلَى مِلَّةِ أَبِينَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ  
حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ.

“We have entered the morning on the disposition of Islām, on the word of sincerity, on religion of our Prophet, Muḥammad, and the religion of our father, Ibrāhīm, the upright, who was not one of the idolaters.”

He should supplicate and say:

اللَّهُمَّ اصْلِحْ لِي دِينِي الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةُ أَمْرِي، وَاصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ الَّتِي  
فِيهَا مَعَاشِي، وَاصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي، وَاجْعَلِ الْحَيَاةَ  
زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ، وَاجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ.

“O Allāh, rectify for me my religion which is the protection of my affairs, and rectify for me my worldly life in which is my living, and rectify for me my Afterlife in which is my place of return. Make life for me an increase in everything that is good and make death for me a rest from all evil.”

He should supplicate like Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) and say:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ، وَأَنْتَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، مَا شَاءَ  
اللَّهُ كَانَ وَمَا لَمْ يَشَأْ لَمْ يَكُنْ، لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ، أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ  
اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا، اللَّهُمَّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ  
شَرِّ نَفْسِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ أَنْتَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا، إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ.



“O Allāh, You are my Lord. There is no god but You. In You I trust. You are the Lord of the Glorious Throne. There is no might and no power save in You, the Exalted, the Magnificent. What Allāh wills, is, and what He does not will does not exist. I know that Allāh is Powerful over all thing, and comprehends everything in knowledge and counts everything in its number. O Allāh, verily I take refuge in You from the evil of my soul and the evil of every beast whose forelock You hold. Verily my Lord is on a straight path.”

These are supplications and words of remembrance that no Muslim [a person who endeavors to seek guidance to win the Afterlife] should overlook.

Before he sets out for the morning prayer (*ṣalāt al-fajr*), he should pray the Sunnah prayer at home. After that, he heads towards the *masjid* and says:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَسْأَلُكَ بِحَقِّ السَّائِلِیْنَ عَلَیْكَ وَبِحَقِّ مِمَّشَاۤیْ  
هَذَا اِلَیْكَ فَاِنِّیْ لَمْ اُخْرِجْ شَرًّا وَلَا بَطْرًا وَلَا رِیَآءًا وَلَا سُمْعَةً  
خَرَجْتُ اِتِّقَاءَ سَخَطِكَ وَابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِكَ فَاَسْأَلُكَ اَنْ تَنْقِذَنِّیْ  
مِنَ النَّارِ وَاَنْ تَغْفِرَ لِّیْ ذُنُوْبِیْ اِنَّهُ لَا یَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ

“O Allāh, verily I ask You by those who ask You, and by this walking of mine towards You. I did not set out with insolence, with frivolity, with hypocrisy, and with vanity. Rather I went out with fear of Your wrath and with desire for Your good pleasure. I ask You, therefore, to deliver me from Hell, and to forgive me my sins, for verily, no one forgives sins except You.”<sup>5</sup>

When he enters the *masjid*, let him abide by the Prophet’s (ﷺ) words in his Ṣaḥīḥ: “When any of you enters the *masjid*, he should

<sup>5</sup> Aḥmad, vol.3, p.21; Ibn Mājah #778. Its chain includes ‘Aṭīyya al-‘Awfī who is weak.

send prayers upon the Prophet (ﷺ) and say:

«اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ»

“O Allāh, open for me the doors of Your mercy.”

When he exists, let him say:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ»

“O Allāh, I ask You by Your grace.”<sup>6</sup>

After this, he should try to get into the first row (*saff*) and recite similar remembrance (*adhkār*) and supplications (*adʿiyya*) as he waits for the congregation prayer to begin.

After the prayer, he is encouraged to stay in his place till sunrise.

Anas (*raḍiyAllāhu ʿanhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever performs *fajr* in congregation then sits in remembrance of Allāh until the sun rises, then prays two units of prayer, it was for him like blessing of *ḥajj* and *ʿumrah* completely, completely, completely.”<sup>7</sup>

Four things should be the duties (*waṣāʾif*) of his time: supplication (*duʿāʾ*), remembrance (*dhikr*), recital (*qirāʾa*), and contemplation (*fikr*). Let him observe these to the best of his ability and think of ways to get rid of distractions and things that occupy him from good in order to be able to perform his daily duties. He should ponder on Allāh’s blessings to be of those who give abundant thanks (*shukr*).

*The second wurd of the day:* The time between sunrise (*ṭulūʾ al-shams*)

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<sup>6</sup> Muslim #713; Abū Dāwūd #465; Nasāʾī, vol.2, p.53 from Abū Asīd and Abū Ḥamīd

<sup>7</sup> Tirmidhī #585; al-Baghawī #710 from Anas (*raḍiyAllāhu ʿanhu*). Its chain includes Abū Zīlāl who is weak. It is rendered fair through corroborating evidence, however, mentioned by al-Mundhirī in *al-Tarḡhib waʾl-Tarḥīb*, vol.1, p.164-166. For this reason, the erudite scholar al-Albānī ruled that it is sound in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ* #6222.

and forenoon (*al-duḥā*). Forenoon occurs three hours after the day's beginning if we assume that the day last for twelve hours. It is thus the fourth hour. This is a noble time (*waqt sharīf*) with two duties:

- i. The first of which is the forenoon prayer (*ṣalāt al-duḥā*).
- ii. The second pertains to the people and includes visiting the sick, witnessing a funeral, attending a gathering of knowledge, or fulfilling a need of a Muslim. If one does not do any of that, let him occupy himself with recital and remembrance.

*The third wurd of the day:* The time between forenoon (*duḥā*) and midday (*ẓawāl*)

In addition to the four categories, the duty of this time includes two additions:

1. Working to make one's living and going to the market: if one is a merchant, let him do his trade with honesty (*sidq*) and trust (*amāna*). If he is a manufacturer, let him construct with sincerity (*naṣiḥa*) and compassion (*shafaqa*). He should never forget to remember Allāh Most High in whatever he does, and he should be content with little.
2. The siesta (*qaylūla*): This makes the night prayer (*qiyām al-layl*) easier just like the predawn meal (*suhūr*) eases fasting (*ṣiyām*). If he naps he should do his best to wake up early enough before noon to get recitey for the prayer before the entering of its time.

Know that the day and night consist of twenty-four hours and the moderate way is to sleep one third of that, which is eight hours. Whoever sleeps less than that will not be spared from physical instability, and those who sleep more become very lazy. If one sleeps more than that at night, there is no reason to sleep during the day; those who do not get enough sleep at night use the day to compensate for that.

*The fourth wird of the day:* The time between noon (*ẓawāl*) and the end of the noon prayer (*ṣalāt al-ẓuhr*).

This is the shortest and the best set portion of the day. During this time, when the muezzin makes the call to prayer he should answer him by repeating his words. Then he stands to offer four units of prayer. It is recommended to lengthen them, for the doors of heaven are opened at that time. After this, he offers the *ẓuhr* prayer and its recommended units and then offers four more supererogatory units.

*The fifth wird of the day:* The time between that and the afternoon prayer (*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*).

During this time, he is encouraged to busy himself with remembrance (*dhikr*), prayer (*ṣalāt*), and different types of goodness (*ḥayr*). One of the best actions to do is to wait for the next prayer after the prayer.

*The sixth wird of the day:* The time between the afternoon prayer (*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*) and the yellowing of the sun.

The only prayers during this time are the four units between the *adhān* and the *iqāma* and the obligatory after *ʿaṣr* prayer. After them, he should busy himself with the four categories mentioned in the first set portion of the day. The best thing to do during this time is to recite (*tilāwa*) the Qurʾān with contemplating (*tadbīr*) and trying to understand (*tafḥum*) its meanings.

*The seventh wird of the day:* The time between the yellowing and setting of the sun.

This is a noble time. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī says: ‘They used to magnify the evening more than the day.’ It is especially recommended to

glorify Allāh (*tasbīḥ*) and seek forgiveness (*istighfār*) during this time.

The litanies of the day end at sunset. The servant should now observe his states and take himself into account, for a part of his path has come to an end. Let him realize that life is but days that all end one by one.

Al-Ḥasan says: ‘O Son of Ādam! You are but days; when your day is over, a part of you is over.’

He should ask himself: Was today equal to yesterday? If he holds that he did abundant good at daytime, he should thank Allāh Exalted and Most High for the opportunity. If this was not the case, let him repent and be determined to make up for his negligence (*tafīr*) at night, for good deeds erase bad ones. He should thank Allāh for his bodily health (*ṣiḥa*) and the remaining life that he can use to compensate for his shortcomings (*taqsīr*). Some of the predecessors favored that one should not let a day pass without giving charity (*ṣadaqah*) and did whatever they could to take part in all deeds of goodness.

## Section Two:

### The Litanies of the Night

*The first nird of the night:* The time between sunset and the evening prayer (*‘ishā*).

When the sun sets, one offers the sunset prayer (*maghrib*) and then stands in prayer till the evening prayer (*‘ishā*). It has been reported that Anas (*radī: Allāhu ‘anhū*) said about the words of Allāh Most High:

تَسْجُدُ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ  
يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

“Their sides part [i.e., they arise] from [their] beds; they supplicate their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32):16]

“This verse was revealed regarding the companions of Allāh’s Messenger who used to pray between the sunset prayer and the evening prayer.”<sup>8</sup>

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “If a person offers six units of prayer after the sunset prayer and does not speak evil between them, they equal for him the worship of twelve years.”<sup>9</sup>

*The second nird of the night:* The time between the disappearance of the twilight and going to sleep

It is recommended to pray between the two prayer calls if possible. He should recite:

اَللّٰهُمَّ تَرَيُّدُ الْكِتٰبِ

“*Alif, Lam, Mim.* [This is] the revelation of the Book.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32):1-2]

and

تَبَرُّكَ الَّذِي يَدُو الْمَلِكِ

“Blessed is He in whose hand is dominion.”

[*al-Mulk* (67):1]

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<sup>8</sup> Tirmidhi #3194; al-Tabarī, vol.21, p.63 with a good chain. Al-Suyūṭī relates it in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol.5, p.184 and adds an attribution to Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ibn Mardawayh, and Muḥammad Ibn Naṣr in *Kitāb al-Ṣalāt*.

<sup>9</sup> Tirmidhi #435; and Ibn Mājah #1374. Its chain includes ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abū Khath’am who is weak. Al-Dhahabī relates this ḥadīth from him in *al-Miẓān*, vol.3, p.194, as one of his disclaimed reports.

Indeed, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) would not sleep before reading them.<sup>10</sup>

Ibn Mas'ūd (*raḍīy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrates another ḥadīth where Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "He who recites *Sūrah al-Wāqī'ah* every night will not be afflicted with poverty."<sup>11</sup>

*The third wird of the night: The witr Prayer before sleep*

As for those who observe the night prayer (*qiyām al-layl*), delaying the *witr* is better for them. 'Ā'ishah (*raḍīy Allāhu 'anhā*) said: "In every part of the night the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) performed the *witr*: the beginning, the middle, and the end. In the end, he performed *witr* before dawn."<sup>12</sup>

After *witr*, one should say thrice:

«سُبْحَانَ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ»

"Exalted is the Sovereign, the All-Holy."

*The fourth wird of the night: Sleep*, the reason we have included this in the litanies (*awrād*) is that with the observation of the proper etiquette and intention of sleep, it becomes worship (*'ibādah*).

Mu'adh (*raḍīy Allāhu 'anhu*) has said: 'I seek reward with my sleep just as I seek reward when I am awake.'

<sup>10</sup> Tirmidhī #2894 from Jābir (*raḍīy Allāhu 'anhu*) with a weak chain that includes Layth Ibn Abī Sulaym.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī related it in *al-'Ilal al-Mutanābiya*, vol.1, p.105; al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, 6/153, attributing it also to Ibn 'Asākir, Abū 'Ubayd, al-Hārith, and Abū Ya'lā; and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Shu'ab*. It is weak; its chain is interrupted, inconsistent, weak, and disclaimed, as stated by al-Munāwī in *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol.6, p.201. Refer also to *Lisān al-Miẓān*, vol.6, p.392.

<sup>12</sup> Bukhārī, vol.2, p.406; Muslim #745; Nasā'ī, vol.3, p.230; Tirmidhī #456, 2925; and Abū Dāwūd #1435, 1437.

The etiquette of sleep includes going to sleep in a state of ritual purity (*ṭahāra*), for ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) narrates that when Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) wanted to sleep, he would perform ablution (*wuḍū’*) like that performed for prayer (*ṣalāh*).<sup>13</sup>

‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Aṣ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘The spirits (*arwāb*) are ascended to heaven when they sleep. There they are commanded to prostrate (*sujūd*) by the throne (*‘arsb*). Those that are pure (*tāhir*) prostrate by the throne, but those that are not pure prostrate far away from the throne.’<sup>14</sup>

One should also repent before sleeping, for if one purifies his outer (*ṣābir*) he should also purify the inner (*bātin*); after all, he might pass away in his sleep.

He should also abolish any dishonesty (*ghishb*) he might have in his heart (*qalb*) towards a Muslim. He should not intend to wrong a Muslim nor be determined to sin after waking up.

If a person has something to bequest, he should not spend a night without having his will is written with him. It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs, in the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A Muslim who has anything with him to will, has no right to spend three nights except that his will is written with him.”<sup>15</sup>

He should not soften his mattress too much so as to make it overly comfortable as that only increases his sleep. When the Prophet’s (ﷺ) mattress was folded, he said: “Its softness hindered me from my prayer tonight.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Muslim #305 with the addition: “While he was in a state of sexual impurity.”

<sup>14</sup> The authenticity of this is questionable!

<sup>15</sup> Bukhārī, vol.5, p264; Muslim #1627; Mālik vol.2, p761; Abū Dāwūd #2862; Tirmidhī #974; Nasā’ī, vol.6, p238-239; and Ibn Mājah #2699.

<sup>16</sup> Abū’l-Shaykh in *Akblāq al-Nabī*, p.137. Its chain is severely weak.



He should not sleep until he is about to fall asleep, for the Salaf used to sleep only when sleep overcame them.

He should sleep facing the *qibla*, recite the supplications that occur in the narrations, and sleep on his right side. Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When one of you goes to his bed, let him dust off his bed with the inside of his lower garment, for he does not know what came onto it after him.”<sup>17</sup>

When he lies down, he should say:

بِاسْمِكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَئِي وَصَعْتُ جَنْبِي، وَبِكَ أَرْفَعُهُ، إِنْ أَمْسَكَتَ نَفْسِي  
فَارْحَمْنَاهَا، وَإِنْ رَدَدْتَهَا فَاحْفَظْهَا بِمَا تَحْفَظُ بِهِ عِبَادَكَ الصَّالِحِينَ.

“In your name, my Lord, I have lain down on my side, and in remembering You I get up. If You seize my soul, then forgive me, and if You release it, then protect it with what You protect Your righteous servants with.”<sup>18</sup>

It occurs in a ḥadīth of ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) that when the Prophet (ﷺ) got himself to his mattress every night, he joined his palms, blew into them, and then recite into them:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

“Say, “He is God, [who is] One.”

[*al-Ikhlāṣ* (112):1]

and

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ

“Say, “I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak.”

[*al-Falaq* (113):1]

<sup>17</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.107; Muslim #2714; Tirmidhī #3398; and Abū Dāwūd #5050.

<sup>18</sup> Bukhārī and Muslim. It is a part of the ḥadīth mentioned before it.

and

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ

“Say, “I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind.”

[*al-Nās* (114):1]

Then he wiped whatever he could with his palms, starting from the head and the face and the front side of his body. He did this thrice.<sup>19</sup>

It also occurs in the ḥadīth of al-Barā' Ibn 'Āzib (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: “When you come to your resting place, perform ablution like that for prayer. Then lie down on your right side and say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْلَمْتُ نَفْسِي إِلَيْكَ، وَقَوَّضْتُ أَمْرِي إِلَيْكَ، وَأَلْجَأْتُ  
ظَهْرِي إِلَيْكَ، رَهْبَةً وَرَغْبَةً إِلَيْكَ، لَا مَلْجَأَ وَلَا مَنَاجَا مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ،  
آمَنْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْتَ، وَنَبِيِّكَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلْتَ.

‘O Allāh, I have surrendered myself to You, turned my face toward You, and entrusted my affairs to You. I have entrusted my back to You for safety in hope and fear. There is no refuge and no escape from You except in Yourself. I have faith in your Book which You revealed, and Your Prophet, whom You sent.’

If you die that night, you die in the natural state of disposition (*fi-tra*), and if you wake up in the morning, you have gained something good.”<sup>20</sup>

‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrates that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) told him

<sup>19</sup> Bukhārī, vol.9, p.56; Muslim #2710; Tirmidhī #3391; and Abū Dāwūd #5046.

<sup>20</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.97; Muslim #2710; Tirmidhī #3391; and Abū Dāwūd #5046.

and Fāṭimah (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhā*): “When you lie down to your resting place or when you get yourselves to your mattress, glorify Allāh thirty three times<sup>21</sup>, praise Him thirty three times<sup>22</sup>, and magnify Him thirty four times.<sup>23</sup> That is better than a servant for you.”<sup>24</sup>

The ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) about preserving the *ḥaḳāt* of Ramaḍān is well-known. It occurs therein that a devil told him: “When you get yourself to your mattress, recite *āyat al-kursī*, for (if you recite it) there will always be with you a protector from Allāh and no devil will approach you.” When he told Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) about this, he said: “He has told you the truth, even though he is a vehement liar (*kadhīb*).”<sup>25</sup>

It occurs in the collection of Muslim that when the Prophet (ﷺ) would get himself to the mattress, he would say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا، وَكَفَانَا، وَأَوَانَا، فَكَمْ مِمَّنْ لَا  
كَافِيَ لَهُ وَلَا مُؤَيِّ

“Praise be to Allāh who has fed us and given us drink and protected us and given us shelter. Many are those who have no protector and no granter of shelter.”<sup>26</sup>

When one wakes up for the Night Prayer (*tabajjud*), let him recite the supplication of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ):

<sup>21</sup> by saying: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ‘*Subhān-Allāh*’

<sup>22</sup> by saying: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ‘*alḥamdulillāh*’

<sup>23</sup> by saying: اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ‘*Allāhu akbar*’

<sup>24</sup> Bukhārī, vol.7, p.59; Muslim #2727; Tirmidhī #3405; and Abū Dāwūd #2988.

<sup>25</sup> Bukhārī, vol.4, p.396. Al-Ḥāfiẓ says in *Hudā al-Sarī*, p. 42: “Al-Mustamlī connected it in his report from Muḥammad Ibn ‘Aqil, from Abū’l-Dardā’ Ibn Munīb, from him.

<sup>26</sup> Muslim #2715; Tirmidhī #3393; Abū Dāwūd #5053 from Anas (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*).

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ، أَنْتَ قَيِّمُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ، وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ، لَكَ مُلْكُ  
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ، وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ، أَنْتَ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ،  
وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ، أَنْتَ الْحَقُّ، وَوَعْدُكَ الْحَقُّ، وَلِقَاؤُكَ حَقٌّ، وَقَوْلُكَ حَقٌّ، وَالْجَنَّةُ حَقٌّ، وَالنَّارُ  
حَقٌّ، وَمُحَمَّدٌ حَقٌّ، وَالسَّاعَةُ حَقٌّ، اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ أَسْلَمْتُ، وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ، وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ، وَإِلَيْكَ  
أَتَيْتُ، وَبِكَ خَاصَمْتُ، وَإِلَيْكَ حَاكَمْتُ، فَاعْفُ عَنِّي مَا قَدَّمَكَ وَمَا أَخَّرْتُ، وَمَا أَسْرَرْتُ  
وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُ

“O Allāh, our Lord, to You belongs all praise. You are the maintainer of the heavens and the earth and what they hold. To You belongs all praise. You are the Truth and Your promise is the truth. Your meeting is true, Paradise is true, and the Fire is true. The Prophets are true, Muḥammad is true, and the Hour is true. O Allāh, to You I have submitted, in You I have believed, and in You I put my trust. To You I have turned, by You I contend, and to Your judgment I summon. Forgive me what has come from me and what will come, and what I have concealed and what I have done in openly.”

Another report says [with addition]:

أَنْتَ الْمُقَدِّمُ وَأَنْتَ الْمُؤَخِّرُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

“You are the one who puts forth and the one who keeps back. There is no god but You.”<sup>27</sup>

One should do his best to ensure that his last words before sleeping are remembrance of Allāh Most High and the first words that his tongue utters upon waking up are remembrance of Allāh Most High. These two are a sign of faith (*īmān*).

<sup>27</sup> This is a part of the ḥadīth of ‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) mentioned two ḥadīths before this.

*The fifth wird of the night:* The time between the first half of the night and the beginning of the last sixth. This is a noble time. Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) says: ‘I asked Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ): ‘Which prayer at night is the best?’ so he said: “The half of the night or the last third of it, but few are those who do it.”<sup>28</sup>

It has been narrated that Prophet Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: ‘My Lord, which hour should I stand for you?’ so Allāh Most High revealed to him: ‘O Dāwūd, do not stand the first part of the night or the last, but stand in the middle so that you are alone with Me and I am alone with you. Then raise your needs to Me.’

When one stands for the *tabajjud*, he should recite the last ten verse of *Al-‘Imrān*, as it occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that the Prophet (ﷺ) did so.<sup>29</sup>

When he gets up at night, he should recite the previously mentioned supplications and then initiate his prayers with two light prayer units. Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When one of you gets up at night to pray, let him begin with two light prayer units.”<sup>30</sup> After this, he should pray two units at a time.

What has been narrated the most is that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed thirteen units at night along with the *witr*.<sup>31</sup> The least amount is seven.

*The Sixth wird of the night:* The last sixth of the night when dawn approaches, Allāh says:

<sup>28</sup> Al-Bayhaqī, *al-Shu‘ab*. Its chain is weak, as stated in *Da‘if al-Jami’ al-Saghar* #1120. A ḥadīth on the topic has also been narrated from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

<sup>29</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.189; Muslim #762; Mālik, vol.1, p.121; Abū Dāwūd #58; and Nasā’ī, vol.2, p.30, vol.3, p.210 from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*).

<sup>30</sup> Muslim #768; Abū Dāwūd #1323.

<sup>31</sup> Bukhārī, vol.3, p.27; Muslim #738 from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). These include the two voluntarily units after the Evening Prayer.

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

“And in the hours before dawn they would ask forgiveness.”  
[*al-Dhāriyat* (51):18]

In a ḥadīth: “A man’s reciting (*qirā’a*) in the last part of the night is attended (*maḥḍūra*).”<sup>32</sup>

Tāwūs once went to a man at pre-dawn (*waqt al-siḥr*), but when he was told that he was sleeping, he said: ‘I used to see no one sleeping before dawn!’

When the student of the path (*murīd*) stops his pre-dawn prayers (*ṣalāt al-siḥr*), he should seek Allāh’s forgiveness. It has been narrated that Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy: Allāhu ‘anhumā*) used to do so.

### Section Three:

## The Litanies Vary as Conditions Vary

Know that the state of those who travel (*sālik*) the path of the Afterlife is one of the six: The worshiper (*‘ābid*), the scholar (*‘ālim*), the student (*muta’llim*), the guardian (*nālī*), the worker (*muḥtarif*) and one who is immersed in and totally occupied with the love of Allāh (*mustaqbriq bi-muḥabbatillāh*).

THE FIRST IS THE WORSHIPER (*‘ābid*): He has left all occupations for the sake of devotional worship (*ta’abbud*). This one observes the litanies (*arrād*) we have mentioned. His duties (*waḥd’if*) might vary just as the states of the worshipers from the predecessors would vary. Some of them were occupied with recitation (*tilāwa*) so much that they completed the Qur’ān once, twice,

<sup>32</sup> Ibn ‘Adi narrated it in *al-Kamīl*, vol.6, p.2093, in the biography of Kulthum, saying: ‘He narrates expedient reports from ‘Atā’ and others with no corroborative chains.

or even thrice in a single day, and others would be busy with glorification (*tasbīḥ*). Some prayed all the time and others would circumambulate (*tawāf*) the House frequently.

Someone might now ask to which of these litanies one should dedicate most of his time.

Know that reading (*qirā'a*) and contemplating (*tadbīr*) the Qur'ān while standing in prayer combines them all, but some might find difficulty in doing that on a constant basis. The best option depends on one's situation. Since the purpose of the litanies is to purify the heart (*taḥkīyya al-qalb*), the student of the path should see what has the strongest effect on them and start observing that constantly. Then, if he becomes weary, he should move on to another type.

Abū Sulaymān al-Darānī said: 'If you find your heart in standing, do not bow, and if you find it in bowing, do not get up.'

THE SECOND IS THE SCHOLAR (*'ālim*): The order of the set portions of those whose knowledge benefits the people in form of legal verdicts, teaching, authoring, or reminding differs from the order of the worshipers. This is because such a person needs to recite and author books and benefit others. If this takes all of his time, it is the best thing he can do after the obligatory prayers. It should be noted that what we mean with knowledge that is given precedence over worship is that which encourages others to work for the Afterlife and helps them take the path that leads to it.

It is best for the scholar as well to divide his time, for the soul is not patient enough to spend all of its time with knowledge. Therefore, he should dedicate the time between the morning prayer (*ḥajr*) and sunrise to the remembrance (*adhkār*) and litanies (*awrād*) in the way we have mentioned. From sunrise to forenoon, he should benefit

the people and teach them. If he has no students, he should use the time to contemplate (*tafkīr*) the sciences, for the clarity of the heart (*ṣafā' al-qalb*) after remembrance and before becoming busy with worldly concerns makes it easier to grasp difficult issues. After that, from forenoon to afternoon, he should recite and write and not stop except for the purpose of eating, purifying himself, offering the obligatory prayer (*maktūba*), or taking the midday nap (*qaylūla*). From afternoon to the yellowing of the sun, he should listen to the students who recite Qur'ānic exegesis, ḥadīth, or any other beneficial knowledge to him. The time between the yellowing of the sun and sunset he should spend in seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*) and glorifying Allāh (*tasbīḥ*).

In this way, his first *wird* consists of the action of the tongue and the second consists of the action of the heart ('*aml al-qalb*) and contemplation (*tafkīr*). The third consists of the action of the eyes ('*aml al-'ayn*) and hands and reading and copying, and the fourth one after afternoon consists of listening ('*aml al-sam'*). The latter allows the eyes and the hands to rest, as it may be that reading and copying after afternoon is harmful to the eyes.

With respect to night, the best division is the division of al-Shafī'ī who used to divide the night into three parts: the first part was for writing knowledge, the second was for prayer, and the third was for sleep. This might be too burdensome in the summer unless one sleeps a lot during the day.

THE THIRD IS THE STUDENT (*muta'llim*): Studying is better than busy-ing oneself with remembrance (*adhb-kār*) and voluntary worship (*nawāfil*). The student observes the same order of the litanies as the scholar does, except that when the scholar is occupied with benefitting others, the student is occupied with benefitting from him. When the scholar is busy authoring a book, he is busy with writing notes and copying. If he a layman, attend-



ing gatherings of remembrance (*dhikr*), knowledge (*ilm*), and admonition (*waʿz*) is better for him than observing voluntary litanies.

THE FOURTH IS THE GUARDIAN (*wālī*): This refers to people like Imām, judge (*qāḍī*), or someone responsible for the affairs of the Muslims. For a person like this, taking care of the needs and wishes of the Muslims sincerely and according to the Sharīʿah is better than the aforementioned set portions. This is because of the fact that these are acts of worship that benefit others. In the daytime, a guardian should only perform the obligatory prayers and use the rest of the time to his duties. He should suffice with the litanies of the night.

THE FIFTH IS THE WORKER (*muhtarif*): He is someone who needs to make an income for himself or his family. He is not allowed to use all of his time in devotional worship, but he should instead work hard to make a living while always remembering Allāh. After he has earned enough, he observes the litanies

THE SIXTH IS THE ONE IMMersed IN LOVING ALLĀH (*mustaghriq bi-muḥabbatillāh*): The wurd of this person-after the obligatory prayers-is the presence of heart (*ḥudūr al-qalb*) with Allāh who will direct them to the portions He wants.

One should be constant in his set portions, for the Prophet (ﷺ) says: “The most beloved deeds to Allāh Most High are the most constant ones, even if they are little.”<sup>33</sup>

The Prophet’s (ﷺ) actions were continuous rain.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.109; and Muslim #782 from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*).

<sup>34</sup> Bukhārī, vol.4, p.206; Muslim #783; Aḥmad, vol.6, p.43; Abū Dāwūd, #370 from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*) as well. In this ḥadīth, the constant nature and moderateness of his actions are likened to continuous and still rain.

THE TENTH FOUNDATION

## On Night Vigilance

Section One:

### The Excellence of the Night Vigilance

Allāh says:

تَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ

“Their sides part [i.e., they arise] from [their] beds.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32):16]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Observe the Night vigilance (*qiyām al-layl*), for it is the habit of the pious before you. It is a means of gaining proximity (*qurba*) to your Lord, forgiveness (*maghfira*) for your sins, and prevents from sin.”<sup>1</sup>

There are many traditions about its excellence.

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<sup>1</sup> Hākim, vol.1, p.308; al-Bayhaqī, vol.2, p.502 from Abu Umāmah. It has weakness in it. Also from Tirmidhī #3543; and Ibn Naṣr in *Qiyām al-Layl*, p. 18 from Bilāl. It includes a narrator accused of lying. Also from Ibn ‘Adī in *al-Kāmil*, vol.4, p.1597 from Salmān. It, too, has weakness. The erudite scholar al-Albānī declared it fair through the aforementioned chains in *Irwā’ al-Ghālil* #452.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: ‘I have not found any worship requires more patience than praying in the middle of the night (*janf al-layl*).’ He was asked: ‘Why do those who pray at night have the finest faces?’ so he replied: ‘Because they secluded themselves with the Most Merciful and He clothed them from His light!’

## Section Two: What Facilitates Its Performance

Know that praying at night is difficult (*sa‘b*) except for those to whom Allāh has made it easy by fulfilling certain conditions (*shurūṭ*). Some of these conditions are external (*bāṭin*) and some are internal (*ẓāhir*).

The external conditions include eating little.

One of them would say: ‘O students of the path! Do not eat a lot, lest you drink a lot and then sleep a lot and finally lose a lot.’

They also include not tiring oneself with heavy work during the day and not leaving the midday nap (*qaylūla*) as it makes the night vigilance easier. One should also avoid sins.

Al-Thawrī said: ‘I was prevented from the night vigilance for five months due to a sin (*dhanb*) I committed.’

The internal conditions include erasing ill feelings from the hearts towards other Muslims, voiding it from innovations (*bid‘ah*), and turning it away from worldly vanities (*faḍl al-dunyā*).

They also include constant and overwhelming fear (*kawf*) in the heart, expecting death to come soon, and being aware of the excel-

lence (*fadl*) of the night vigilance.

One of the most honourable motivators is loving Allāh Most High and having strong faith (*quwa al-īmān*) that when one stands up to pray he is having an intimate discourse with his Lord who is present and sees him. This motivates him to lengthen his prayer.

Abū Sulaymān said: “The people of the night enjoy their night more than the people of idle play (*ahlul-lahwa*) enjoy their playing. Were it not for the night, I would not want to stay (*baqā*) in this world.”

It occurs in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There is an hour in the night; no Muslim servant coincides with it and asks Allāh for good except that He gives it to him. This happens every night.”<sup>2</sup>

The Night vigilance is of various levels (*marātib*):

THE FIRST LEVEL is praying the entire night. This has been narrated from some of the predecessors (*salaf*).

THE SECOND LEVEL is praying one half of the night. This, too, has been narrated from some of the predecessors. The best way here is to sleep the first third and the last sixth of the night.

THE THIRD LEVEL is praying one third of the night. In this case, one should sleep the first half and the last sixth. This is the night vigilance of Prophet Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*).

It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs: “The most beloved prayer to Allāh is the prayer of Dāwūd; he used to sleep one half of the night, stand one third of it in prayer, and sleep one sixth of it.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Muslim #274; Aḥmad, 3/313; and Ṭabarānī in *al-Ṣaḡhir*, vol.2, p.29 from Jābir.

<sup>3</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.286; Muslim #1159, 189; Abū Dāwūd #2448; Nasā’ī, vol.1, p.321; Ibn Mājah #1712; al-Dārimī, vol.2, p.20; and Aḥmad, vol.2, p.160, 206 from Ibn ‘Amr.

It is good to sleep in the last part of the night as that takes off the traces of sleepiness that one might otherwise have on his face in the morning and lessens the yellowness of the face as well.

THE FOURTH LEVEL is praying the sixth or the fifth of the night.

If one does this, it is better to do so in the second half. Some say it is better to pray in the last sixth.

Not observing any particular schedule as doing so is difficult. There are two ways of doing this:

The first way: praying the first part of the night until one is overcome by sleep, then getting up to pray again upon waking up, and then sleeping again when overcome by sleep. This requires heavy struggle, yet it is what some of the predecessors would do. It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that Anas (*radīy-Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “If we wanted to see Allāh’s Messenger pray at night we would see him, and if we wanted to see him sleeping, we would see him.”<sup>4</sup>

‘Umar (*radīy-Allāhu ‘anhu*) would pray at night what Allāh wished him to pray and then, in the last part of the night, he woke his family up saying: “The prayer, the prayer.”

Al-Ḍaḥḥāk said: ‘I observed a people who were shy of Allāh in the darkness of the night because of their long sleep.’

The second way: Sleeping the first part of the night and waking up to pray for the remaining part after sleeping enough.

Sufyān al-Thawrī said: ‘It is but the first sleep of the night; when I wake up, I do not sleep in it.’

<sup>4</sup> This is actually the wording of Nasā’i, vol.3, p.213, but a narration with the same meaning is found in the Ṣaḥīḥ!

THE FIFTH LEVEL is praying two or four units. It has been narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Pray at night; pray four, pray two.”<sup>5</sup>

It occurs in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “If a person wakes up at night, wakes up his woman-folk, then they offer two units of prayer together, they are written that night among the men and women who remember Allāh abundantly.”<sup>6</sup>

Ṭalḥah Ibn Mūsārrif used to tell his family to pray at night saying: ‘Pray two units, for prayer in the middle of the night diminishes one’s sins.’

These are the ways the night can be divided. The student of the path should choose for himself what is easy to perform. If praying in the middle of the night is hard, he should not neglect spending the time between *maghrib* and ‘*ishā*’ in prayer and should observe the set portion before dawn. In this way, he is praying during both ends of the time. This is a seventh level.

### Section Three:

## Those Who Find Purification Difficult at Night

If one finds it hard to purify himself at night and praying is burdensome, he should sit towards the *qibla*, remember Allāh Most High, and supplicate to the best of his ability. If he does not sit, he should supplicate lying down.

If a person has a regular set portion that he observes and he misses it due to being overcome by sleep, he should perform it after the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibn Naṣr; and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Shu‘ab* from al-Hasan in mursal form. The erudite scholar al-Albani declared it weak in *Ḍa‘if al-Jāmi‘* #3487 and *al-Silsilah al-Ḍa‘ifah* #3782.

<sup>6</sup> Abū Dāwūd #1309, 1451 from Abū Sa‘id and Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhuma*) with a ṣaḥīḥ chain. There is also another narration from Abū Hurayrah on the topic.

forenoon prayer (*ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā*). A ḥadīth has been narrated about this.<sup>7</sup>

If one has a habit of praying at night, let him beware of leaving it. It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) told 'Abdullah Ibn 'Amr (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*): "Do not be like so-and-so; he used to stand at night and then stopped standing at night."<sup>8</sup>

#### Section Four:

### The Most Virtuous Days and Nights

With respect to the nights of special virtue that are recommended to be spent in prayer, there are fifteen such nights. The student of the path should not be unmindful of them. After all, if a merchant is unmindful of the profit season, when will he profit?

Seven of these nights occur in Ramaḍān: the 17<sup>th</sup> night in the morning of which occurred the Battle of Badr, and the six odd nights of the last ten nights during which the Night of Power (*layl al-qadr*) is sought.

The eight other nights are: the first night of *Muḥarram*, the night of *ʿAshūrā*, the first night of *Rajab*, the night in the middle of *Rajab*, the 27<sup>th</sup> night of *Rajab* which is the night of the *Mi'rāj*, the night in the middle of *Shabān*, the night of *ʿArafah*, and the nights of the two *ʿIds*.<sup>9</sup> There are narrations that mention prayers for some of these nights, but none of them are authentic.

As for virtuous days (*ayyām al-mufaḍḍila*), they are nineteen: the day

<sup>7</sup> Muslim #747; Mālik, vol.1, p.200; Tirmidhī #581; Abū Dāwūd #1313 from 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

<sup>8</sup> Bukhārī, vol.3, p.331; Muslim #1159; and Nasā'ī, vol.3, p.253.

<sup>9</sup> There is nothing authentic in the Sunnah about spending the nights mentioned by the author in prayer, except the last ten nights of Ramaḍān.

of 'Arafah, the day of 'Āshurā', the 27<sup>th</sup> day of *Rajab*<sup>10</sup> which is the first day Jibrīl ('alayhis-salām) landed to the Prophet (ﷺ),<sup>11</sup> the 27<sup>th</sup> day of Ramaḍān which is the day of the Battle of Badr, the day in the middle of *Sha'bān*, Friday, the two 'Īds, the known days which are the ten days of *Dhū'l-Hijjah*, and the numbered days which are the sunrise days (*ayyām al-tashrīq*).

Some of the virtuous days of the week are: Monday, Thursday, and the days of the white nights (*ayyām al-bīd*)<sup>12</sup>. These are days of great virtue which has been mentioned in the chapter of the virtues of fasting.

This is the end of the book of worship.

With Allāh lies success.

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<sup>10</sup> In *Tabayin al-'Ajab fi ma Warad fi Fadl Rajab*, p. 20, al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Rajab makes a certain statement that this is a lie. I say: the correct view is that this is in the month of Rabī' al-Awwal. Refer to: *Sharḥ Muslim*, vol.2, p.209, and *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd*, vol.1, p.213.

<sup>11</sup> Refer to: *Tabayin al-'Ajab*, p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> These are the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> days.



## INDEX OF ARABIC TERMS

*‘Ashūrā’*: 10<sup>th</sup> Muḥarram, the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the Islāmic calender.

*‘Abd*: pl. *‘ebād*. slave, servant, worshipper.

*Adhān*: *fiqh*: the call to prayer.

*Bid‘ab*: innovation, *fiqh*: that which is newly introduced into the religion of Allāh.

*Da‘īf*: weak. A ḥadīth that has failed to meet the criteria of authenticity.

*Dhikr*: remembrance, *fiqh*: making mention of Allāh.

*Du‘ā*: supplication, invocation, it is an action of worship that may only be directed to Allāh.

*Farḍ*: see *wājib*.

*Fatwā*: *fiqh*: legal ruling.

*Fiqh*: understanding and comprehension. *fiqh*: of the rulings and legislation of Islām.

*Fisq*: pl. *fusūq*. Immorality, transgression, wickedness.

*Ghubṭa*: envy, referring to the permissible form of envy where the envier wishes to have the same blessings as the envied but without desiring to see them removed from the envied. This is opposed to *ḥasad*, the blameworthy form of envy where the envier wishes to see the blessings removed from the envied.

*Ḥāfiẓ*: pl. *ḥuffāẓ*. Ḥadīth Master, commonly referred to one who has memorised at least 100 000 *ahādīth*.

*Ḥadīth*: pl. *ahādīth*, a text attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) describing his actions, words, descriptions and tacit approvals. It consists of two portions, the body of the text (*matn*) and the *isnād*. Rarely the term is also used to refer to a text attributed to a Companion or a Tābi‘ī.

*Ḥajj*: *fiqh*: pilgrimage, one of the pillars of Islām.

*Ḥalāl*: released. *fiqh*: permissible.

*Ḥarām*: forbidden, sacred, restricted. *fiqh*: unlawful, that which the legally responsible person is rewarded for leaving and sinful for doing.

*Ḥasan*: good, fair. A ḥadīth whose *isnād* is continuously linked of just, morally upright narrators but whose precision (*dabṭ*) falls short of the requirements of the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth; containing no irregularity (*shādh*) and no hidden defect (*'illab*). A ḥadīth can be ḥasan in and of itself, or contain a defect but still be ruled to be so due to supporting evidences.

*Hawā'*: base desires.

*Ḥayā'*: modesty, derived from the word *ḥayāt*, or life because it is through modesty that the heart is granted life and it is through the absence of modesty that it dies. It is a state that arises through the servant being aware that Allāh is watching him, having love, fear and awe of Him and thinking little of himself.

*Iḥsān*: beneficence, excellence. To worship Allāh as if one is seeing Him, and knowing that even though one sees Him not, He sees the servant.

*Ikhlāṣ*: sincerity, to strip oneself of worshipping any besides Allāh such that everything one does is performed only to draw closer to Him and for His pleasure. It is to purify ones actions from any but the Creator having a share in them, from any defect or self-desire. The one who has true *ikhlāṣ* (*mukhlis*) will be free of *riyā'*.

*Imām*: model, exemplar. *fiqh*: religious leader, one who leads the congregational prayer or leads a community.

*Īmān*: The firm belief, complete acknowledgement and acceptance of all that Allāh and His Messenger have commanded to have faith in, submitting to it both inwardly and outwardly. It is the acceptance and belief of the heart that includes the actions of the heart and body, therefore it encompasses the establishment of the whole religion. This is why the Imāms and Salaf used to say, 'Faith is the statement of the heart and tongue, action of the heart, tongue and limbs.' Hence it comprises statement, action and belief, it increases through obedience and decreases through disobedience. It includes the beliefs of faith, its morals and manners and the actions demanded by it.

*Isnād*: chain of narration.

*Janābah: fiqh*: state of major impurity.

*Jinn*: another creation besides mankind who are invisible to us. They are also subject to the laws of Islām and will be judged in the Afterlife according to how they lived in this life.

*Khalīfah*: pl. *kbulafā'*. Successor, representative. *fiqh*: of the Prophet (ﷺ), head of the Islāmic state. Also called *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* or Leader of the Believers.

*Khauf*: fear.

*Khuṭbah*: sermon, lecture. *fiqh*: Friday sermon.

*Kufr*: denial, rejection, hiding, technically referring to disbelief. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

*Makrūh: fiqh*: disliked, reprehensible, that which the legally responsible person is rewarded for leaving but not punished for doing.

*Ma'rifa*: gnosis. Knowledge that is acted upon by the one who knows, the Gnostic of Allāh is one who has knowledge of Allāh, the path that leads to Allāh and the pitfalls of that path. He is one who knows Allāh, His Names, Attributes and Actions and then displays *ṣidq* and *ikhlāṣ* towards Allāh in all things. He works towards removing all despicable morals and mannerisms and has *ṣabr* in all of this.

*Matrūk*: abandoned. This refers to a narrator of a ḥadīth who is abandoned due to being accused of lying.

*Mawḍu'*: fabricated ḥadīth. That ḥadīth which is a lie against the Prophet (ﷺ).

*Muḥaddith*: pl. *muḥaddithūn*. Scholar of Ḥadīth.

*Mujtahid*: one who performs *ijtihād*. *fiqh*: that level of scholar who can deduce independent verdicts directly from the primary Islāmic sources.

*Munāfiq*: hypocrite. *fiqh*: one who outwardly displays Islām but inwardly conceals disbelief.

*Mursak*: a ḥadīth whose *isnād* has the name of the Companion missing, i.e. a Successor reports directly from the Prophet (ﷺ). In the eyes of the majority of scholars such a ḥadīth is a sub-category

of the *da'if* ḥadīth.

*Mutashābih*: unclear and ambiguous. *fiqh*: an *āyah* of the Qur'ān that is not clear and conclusive in meaning from the wording of the text itself.

*Qadar*: Allāh's decree of all matters in accordance with His prior knowledge and as dictated by His wisdom.

*Qur'ān*: The actual Word of Allāh revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Arabic language through the medium of the Angel Gabriel and the greatest miracle bestowed him. It consists of 114 chapters commencing with al-Fātiḥah and ending with an-Nās.

*Rajā'*: reverential hope.

*Ramaḍān*: ninth month of the Islāmic calendar.

*Ridā*: contentment and pleasure.

*Riyā'*: showing off, ostentation, an example of which lies in person beautifying actions of worship because he knows people are watching.

*Ruqyā*: recitation used to cure an illness or disease. It can only be done in the Arabic tongue, in words whose meaning is understood, using verses of the Qur'ān or supplications of the Prophet combined with the belief that it is only Allāh who in reality gives the cure.

*Ṣabr*: patience, steadfastness.

*Ṣaḥīḥ*: healthy, sound, authentic, correct. A ḥadīth that has met the criteria of authenticity and can be used as a legal proof.

*Ṣalāh*: *fiqh*: the second pillar of Islām, the prayer.

*Salaf*: predecessors, commonly employed to refer to the first three generations of Muslims.

*Ṣawm*: *fiqh*: fasting, one of the pillars of Islām.

*Shahādah*: testification, witness. The declaration that none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh.

*Sharī'ah*: divine Islāmic law as ordained by Allāh.

*Shayṭān*: Satan, Iblīs, a devil.

*Shirk*: association, technically referring to directing a right that is due

to Allāh Alone to another object of creation, either completely or partially. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

*Sunan*: a compilation of *ahādīth*.

*Sunnah*: way, path. The actions, words, descriptions, commands, prohibitions and tacit approvals of the Prophet (ﷺ).

*Ṭabī'ūn*: The generation following that of the Companions.

*Tab' Ṭabī'ūn*: The generation following that of the *Ṭabī'ūn*.

*Ṭaghbūt*: all that is falsely worshipped besides Allāh.

*Tafsīr*: elucidation, clarification, explanation. *fiqh*: of the Qur'ān..

*Taqwā*: the basic meaning of which is setting a barrier between two things. This is why it is said that one *ittaqā* with his shield, i.e. he set it as a barrier between him and the one who wished him evil. Therefore it is as if the one who has *taqwa* (*muttaqī*) has used his following the commands of Allāh and avoiding His prohibitions as a barrier between himself and the Punishment. Hence he has preserved and fortified himself against the punishment of Allāh through his obeying Him.

*Ṭawāf*: circumambulation of the Ka'bah

*Tawakkul*: trust and absolute reliance.

*Tawhīd*: unification, monotheism, the belief in the absolute Oneness of Allāh. It is to believe that Allāh Alone is the creator, nourisher, and sustainer of the worlds; it is to believe that Allāh Alone deserves to be worshipped; and it is to believe that He has unique and perfect Names and Attributes that far transcend anything that one can imagine.

*Wājib*: *fiqh*: obligatory, that which a legally responsible person is rewarded for doing and sinful for leaving. In the eyes of the majority *wājib* has the same meaning as *farḍ*.

*Wuḍū'*: *fiqh*: ritual ablution.

*Zakāb*: *fiqh*: one of the pillars of Islām, an obligatory tax levied on a Muslim wealth subject to certain criteria.